

A HEROINE OF
1812

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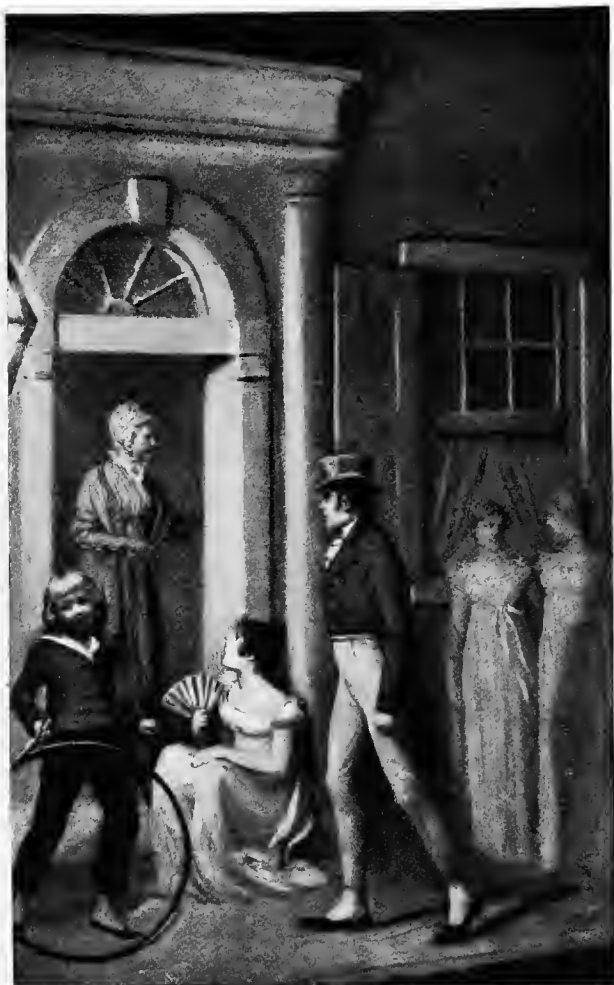


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A Heroine of 1812.



"You'd do well to come out here, Aunt Martha."

A Heroine of 1812

A Maryland Romance

BY

AMY E. BLANCHARD.

Illustrated by Ida Waugh



W. A. WILDE COMPANY

BOSTON

CHICAGO

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A HEROINE OF 1812.

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To My Brother

THE GRANDSON OF AN "OLD DEFENDER "

I LOVINGLY DEDICATE THIS STORY OF

HIS MARYLAND AND MINE

A. E. B.

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CHAPTER I.

When the Ship Came In.

A WARM evening in early June of the year 1812 showed the streets of Baltimore city gay with groups of people crowding the steps of the houses, or sauntering up and down from corner to corner. Slender girls with arms around each other, circles of children merrily piping out some ring-around-a-rosey, young men stopping before this or that door for a few minutes' chat, — all served to make a lively scene.

Lettice Hopkins, in short-waisted gown of sprigged muslin, stood with one slippered foot tapping impatiently the marble step before her uncle's door. "Is yuh see him, Miss Letty?" asked a little colored boy who stopped his occupation of sliding down the cellar door to make his inquiry.

"No, I don't," Lettice returned petulantly, "and

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poor old Mrs. Flynn is moaning and going on because her Patrick is aboard the vessel, and she thinks he's drowned. Run to the corner, Danny, and see if there is a sign of your master." She sat down on the step and looked anxiously in the direction of the street corner toward which Danny was making his way, taking time in doing so, and stopping frequently to switch a chip from the running water in the gutter, or to send a pebble hopping over the cobblestones.

"It certainly is warm for so early in June," Lettice remarked, as she vigorously fanned herself. "You'd do well to come out here, Aunt Martha," she continued, addressing some one in the hall behind her. "There is a breath outside, but little indoors. Don't you think uncle must be here soon? He surely cannot be at the wharf all this time."

"Perhaps he is," her aunt answered. "It is a week since the vessel was due, and in good weather that is too long. It is nothing of a run from here to Boston and back, and your uncle has reason to be somewhat anxious, especially in these days."

"These days," Lettice repeated; "that is what father is always saying, as if these were not good enough days."

Mrs. Hopkins did not answer, but instead, asked, "Where is your father?"

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"Down at the Fountain Inn, I suppose ; it is where he always goes of an evening. They have a deal to talk about, it seems, down there."

"They have, indeed, but isn't that your uncle coming now?" Mrs. Hopkins had come out upon the step and was peering out into the dimly lighted street.

"To be sure it is," Lettice replied. "I will go to meet him, for Mr. Gilmore will stop him if I don't get him over on this side the street." She started off with rapid step, her light scarf floating from her shoulders as she walked.

"She's in!" shouted Danny, who came running on ahead of his master.

At this news Lettice slackened her pace and walked soberly forward to meet her uncle. "Good news, I hear, Uncle Tom," she said as she came up to him.

"Ye-es," he returned, "so far as I am concerned, but —"

"What?" Lettice interrupted. "Hurry and tell me, Uncle Tom. What's wrong? Did anything happen to the vessel?"

"Not to the vessel, except that she was stopped by a British cruiser, and three of our men were carried off as British subjects."

"Oh! And who were they? Not Patrick Flynn,

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I hope. His mother declares that something has happened to him, for she has had a certain dream three nights in succession, — a dream which she insists forebodes ill.”

“Poor Patrick, indeed; one of the best hands aboard, and born on American soil, though his brogue is rich enough for any son of the Emerald Isle.”

“Alas, poor Patrick! Who will tell his mother?”

“I will, of course,” her uncle quietly replied. And Lettice hesitating to enter the house, he passed in before her, spoke a few words to his wife, and then walked back to where a long garden showed borders abloom with the roses of June glimmering faintly from out the dusky green.

Presently arose sounds of wailing and lamenting, and Lettice, unable to restrain her sympathies, rushed back to see poor old Mrs. Flynn rocking back and forth, wringing her hands, and making her moan over the capture of her son.

“There, Winnie, there,” Lettice heard her uncle say. “After all, it is not as bad as it would seem. Pat will find his way back, or I’m mistaken, and there are plenty of persons who will tell you he should be proud to serve in the British navy.”

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"Ah, but they'll be battherin' the life out av 'im, sorr, an' be markin' up his poor back wid the cat, an' indade, sorr, I'm thinkin' he'd betther be dead than alive."

"Pshaw! not a bit of it. Pat's too good a hand for that, and Mr. Joe gave him a word to make no cause for offence, but to do his duty by the ship he is on, just the same as if she were the *Delight*."

"'Tis a hard day, sorr, when our min must be dragged from their proper places an' be put to wurruk for thim as has no right to be dhrivin' thim. Not that I'm so down on the ould counthry, sorr, but I'm not upholdin' thim British min stealers, Misther Tom, sorr, an' it goes agin me grain for a son o' mine to be slavin' for the inimy av the counthry where he was born."

Lettice sat down on the step beside the old woman and began softly to stroke the wrinkled hand which was nervously fingering the hem of Mrs. Flynn's gingham apron. "Never mind, Mrs. Flynn," the girl said; "it will be no time before Patrick will be back again. Why, if he had gone on a long cruise from this port, you'd not see him for years, maybe, and this is no worse. Cheer up, now. Ah, there is Cousin Joe. I'll bid him come out here. I think my father is with him."

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The two men approached, gesticulating excitedly. "It is an outrage," Lettice's father was saying, "and one that Americans will not stand much longer. Odious servitude for our citizens! impressed into a service they despise! our commerce impeded! insults, injuries of all kinds heaped upon us! We will not stand it. There will be a war, sir, for, as the wise Benjamin Franklin so aptly said, 'Our War of Independence has yet to be fought.'"

"Nonsense, William, what was our war of the Revolution?" put in Mr. Hopkins.

"It was the Revolution. We are not yet free, if indignity can be offered us which we must accept silently."

"Ah, Masther Joe, dear," whined Winnie, "ye let thim steal me bhy." Joseph Hopkins, a tall young fellow, sunburnt and stalwart, looked down at her with kindly eyes. "Indeed, Winnie, I did my best to save him and two others, but it was no use."

"Tell us about it, Cousin Joe," said Lettice.

"I have told the tale more than once, cousin, but since you and Winnie will likely give me no peace till I tell it again, I'll spin you my yarn. We were just turning into the bay, after having

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had to go out of our way to escape from the clutches of more than one British cruiser, when we saw a sail which gave us chase, and though the *Delight* was in her own waters, our pursuers were within gunshot in a short time. Then they demanded to search us for deserters. At first I refused, as I knew father would have me do; but we were scarcely prepared to fight a ship of the size of the enemy, and discretion being the better part of valor, and to save a whole skin for the majority of my crew, at last it seemed best to submit to the demand. So poor Patrick, Johnny Carter, as good an Eastern-shoreman as ever lived, and Dick Bump, who never saw the plank of a British ship before, were carried off. Every mother's son of them was born on American soil, and they were claimed as British subjects. It is an outrage! But trust to Pat, Mrs. Flynn, he'll be with us again before long, or my name's not Joe Hopkins. I saw Uncle Edward in Boston, mother," he went on to say, "and he promised to come on with the next ship."

Leaving Mrs. Flynn somewhat comforted, the others took their way again to the front steps, where the men plunged into a discussion of the questions of the day, and Lettice, who cared little

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for letters-of-marque and general reprisals, sat watching the passers-by, once in a while putting a question when the talk became particularly exciting.

She had come up from the Eastern shore of Maryland but a few months before, and had hardly yet become accustomed to life in a big city, having always lived upon the plantation now managed by her eldest brother. The marriage of this big brother had eventually brought about the change which made of Lettice a city girl, for her father concluded to join his brother in Baltimore, and Lettice must perforce accompany him. It was not altogether a happy arrangement for the girl; her uncle's wife was a New England woman, and did not understand her husband's light-hearted little niece, over whom she was disposed to exert an authority which Lettice, if she had been less sweet-tempered, would have resented. Then, too, Aunt Martha did not like negro servants, and Lettice knew no others. Nevertheless, she made friends with old Mrs. Flynn, who reigned over the kitchen, and the other maids did not count, she told her father.

She sat on the step, her thoughts travelling to her old home. How pleasant it must be there this

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hot night, she reflected, with the bay in sight, and the moon shining down upon it. She would like to be dashing down the long level road upon her pretty bay mare, and after a while to come in and find Mammy waiting for her with some cooling drink, and Lutie ready to undress her. She wished Aunt Martha would let her have Lutie, or she wished her father would let her keep house for him and have the old servants about her. Perhaps he would in another year, for she would be seventeen then.

She was aroused from her reverie by her father saying: "War? yes, war say I. Joe, I told you, didn't I, of our meeting at Fountain Inn, and of our resolutions upon the subject? 'No alternative between war and degradation' we decided."

"Oh, father," put in Lettice, "is there really to be war? I thought it was only talk."

"Pray God not. There's been too much talk; now is the time for action."

"And shall you go and fight? And Cousin Joe and Uncle Tom, will they go too?"

"If we are needed, yes. I can answer for all of us."

Lettice slipped her arm across the back of her father's chair. "Oh, father, dear, you'll not go and leave me all alone?"

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"Not all alone, with your Aunt Martha and the servants," spoke up her Uncle Tom.

Lettice looked down a little confused, but her Cousin Joe changed the subject by saying, "They are not for war in Boston, Uncle William."

"So I am told ; and that Massachusetts, so valiant in the Revolution, should be willing tamely to submit to England's insults, is beyond my belief. I cannot understand her indifference."

"A war with England would touch her pocket-book too nearly," Joe replied, laughing.

"Yes, it would interfere with her trade, and she has not the other resources that we have," said Mr. Tom Hopkins, reflectively. "I suspect that you had more than one controversy with Edward, Joe."

"That I did ; and he'll soon be on his way here to resume the argument."

"Does he bring Rhoda with him?" asked Mrs. Hopkins.

"Yes, so he said."

"She'll be a companion for you, Lettice," said Mrs. Hopkins. "She is but a year older. We must try to keep her here for a good long visit. I've not seen Rhoda for five years, but she was a very good child then, and I have no doubt will be a useful influence for you."

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Lettice touched her cousin's arm. "Come, walk to the corner with me," she said. "I'm tired of sitting still, and you all talk nothing but politics."

"You'd rather the subject would be dress, I fancy," Mrs. Hopkins remarked, with a little severity.

"To be sure I would," Lettice laughed, as she walked off. "Sometimes I feel as if I must be saucy to Aunt Martha," she said to her cousin. "Tell me about Rhoda, Cousin Joe. Is she pretty? What does she look like?"

"She is fair, with light hair and blue eyes. She is rather slight, and is quiet in her manner. She does not talk very much unless she is deeply interested, and then she is very earnest."

"Then there will be a chance for my chatter," returned Lettice, the dimples showing around her rosy mouth. "Does she wear her hair in curls, as I do, Cousin Joe?"

"No, she wears it quite plainly."

"And is she tall?"

"Yes, rather so."

"Taller than I?"

"Yes; you are not above what I should call medium height."

"I may grow."

"True; there is time for that."

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"Should you like me better then?" Lettice gave a side glance, and then dropped her curly black lashes over her big blue eyes.

Her cousin laughed. "You would coquet even with me, I verily believe; with me, who am as good as married."

The violet eyes opened wide. "I am not trying to at all. Would I coquet with my blood cousin, who, moreover, is a double cousin?"

"Perhaps not, if you could help it; but you do coquet even with Pat Flynn."

"Now, Cousin Joe, you are trying to tease me."

"And with Mrs. Flynn," Joe continued, "and your father and your brothers."

"My brothers — That reminds me, Cousin Joe, that if there is going to be a war, I suppose they will want to fight too. Alas! I've a mind to turn Yankee and cry down war."

"And let Patrick go unavenged, after all the sweet looks you have cast on him and the honeyed words to his mother?"

"Quit your nonsense, sir. You know I would never give soft glances to a common sailor."

"Thank you, and what am I?"

"No common sailor, but an uncommonly pert young gentleman. You may walk to Julia Gittings's

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with me, and there leave me ; I'll warrant her brother will see me home."

"I warrant he will if I give him a chance, but I've no notion of deserting you, Cousin Lettice. You asked me to walk with you, and I'll complete my part of the contract."

Lettice gave him a soft little dab with her white fingers, and another moment brought them to a stand-still before one of the comfortable houses fronting the square below their own home. They found Miss Julia surrounded by a bevy of young gentlemen in short-waisted coats, and by as many young ladies in as short-waisted gowns.

"Law, Lettice, is it you?" cried Julia. "Have you heard the news? They say we'll surely have war. Won't it be exciting! Howdy, Mr. Joe. Come sit here and tell me of your exploits. Mr. Emery has just been trying to fool us by relating a story of your being overhauled by the British."

"It is true. Isn't it, Joe?" spoke up one of the young men.

"True enough, as three of my boys have sad reason to know," Joe replied. And then again must an account of his experiences be given, amid soft ejaculations from the girls and more emphatic

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ones from the young men. It was not a specially new theme, but one that had not come home to them before, and not a youth that did not walk away toward his home that night with a determination to avenge the outrage at the first opportunity. The next day came the news that war was declared.

CHAPTER II.

The Work of a Mob.

WITHIN the week Rhoda Kendall arrived with her father from Boston. As her Cousin Joe had described her, Lettice was not surprised to meet a quiet, reserved girl. By the side of Lettice's dark hair, pink and white complexion, and deep blue eyes, Rhoda's coloring seemed very neutral, yet the New England girl was by no means as supine as her appearance would indicate, as Lettice soon found out; for before twenty-four hours were over she was arguing with her new acquaintance in a crisp, decided manner, and was so well-informed, so clever with facts and dates, that Lettice retired from the field sadly worsted, but with the fire of an ambitious resolve kindled within her.

"She made me feel about two inches high," she told her father, "and I appeared a perfect ignoramus. Why don't I know all those things about politics and history, father?"

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"Go along, child," he replied. "Deliver me from a clever woman! Learn to be a good housewife, and be pretty and amiable, and you'll do."

"No, but I'll not do," Lettice persisted. "I am not going to let that Boston girl make me feel as small as a mouse, and I don't mean to sit as mum as an owl while she entertains the gentlemen with her knowledge of affairs. She'll be having them all desert our side yet."

Her father laughed. "That's the way the crow flies, is it? My little lass is like to be jealous, and she'll have no one stealing her swains from her. I see. Well, my love, what do you want to know?"

"I want to know why we shouldn't have war. When I listen to Rhoda, she fairly persuades me that we would be a blundering, senseless lot, to war with a great nation like England. She has such a big navy, and we have none to speak of, Rhoda says, and she laughs when I say we won't let ourselves be beaten. We will not, will we, father?"

"No, we will *not*," he emphasized; "and as for our navy, we have not a bad record. Their ships can sail no faster and are no better manned than ours."

"I'd like to see any one manage a vessel better

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than you or Uncle Tom, and even Brother William or Brother James, and Cousin Tom can do anything with one of our clippers. Why, they are as much at home on the water as on the land."

"To be sure. There are no better seamen anywhere than America can produce, and we can show fight. At all events, daughter, we do not mean to be bullied, and though New England has little mind to help us, we'll make our fight on righteous grounds of complaint."

"But won't our trade be spoiled? Rhoda says so."

"You let me talk to Rhoda," said Mr. Hopkins, rising, "and leave politics alone, little one. Run along and help your aunt."

"She doesn't want any help, and she doesn't like me to be in the kitchen. Father, dear, when shall I be old enough to keep house for you, and have Aunt Dorky, and Lutie, and all of them for our servants?"

He put his arm around her caressingly. "We cannot think of such things till this war matter is settled, my pet. I must be on hand to serve if need be, and I couldn't leave my little girl alone, you know."

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"I wish I could fight," said Lettice, solemnly.

Her father smiled. "Pray heaven that you'll never see fight," he said.

But Lettice was soon to see the first effects of war, for the following evening Rhoda's father came in and pulled a paper out of his pocket as he sat down to the table. "What do you think of this, Tom?" he said. "There's a level-headed man for you!" and he read: "We mean to use every constitutional argument and every legal means to render as odious and suspicious to the American people, as they deserve to be, the patrons and contrivers of this highly impolitic and destructive war, in the full persuasion that we shall be supported and ultimately applauded by nine-tenths of our countrymen, and that our silence would be treason to them."

"What do I think of that?" said Mr. Hopkins, "I think that Mr. Hanson is laying up trouble for himself, for I suppose that is the *Federal Republican* you have there."

"It is, and I fully agree with Mr. Hanson, if he is the editor."

"You of Massachusetts may, but we of Maryland do not," returned Mr. Hopkins, with some heat; "and Mr. Hanson will find out to his cost that he

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cannot disseminate such a publication without endangering himself and his property."

Sure enough, on the following Monday evening a party of indignant citizens destroyed the type, presses, paper, etc., of the *Federal Republican*, and razed the house to its foundations, following out Mr. Hopkins's predictions.

"Outrageous!" cried Rhoda, when she heard the reports. "What a lawless set you are here."

"Almost as much so as you were up in Boston some forty years ago," retorted her Cousin Joe, lazily, at which Rhoda's pale blue eyes flashed, and she set her lips defiantly.

"You are talking nonsense!" she said. "That was for our liberty, and this is but the furthering an unnecessary conflict which will ruin the country our fathers so bravely fought for."

"And for which our fathers will bravely fight again, won't they, Cousin Joe?" Lettice broke in. "Mine will, I know, although I don't suppose yours will, Rhoda."

"Sh! Sh!" cried Mrs. Hopkins. "Don't quarrel, children. I hoped you two girls would be good friends, but you are forever sparring. You are not very polite, Lettice. You'll be sending Rhoda home with a poor opinion of Southern hospitality."

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This touched Lettice to the quick. She looked up archly from under her long lashes. "Then I'll be good, Rhoda," she said. "Come, we'll go to market for aunt. I want you to see our Marsh market. Strangers think it is a real pretty one." And the two girls departed, Lettice with basket on arm, curls dancing, and step light; Rhoda with a deep consciousness of the proprieties, giving not so much as a side glance to the young blades who eyed them admiringly as they passed down Market Street. But Lettice dimpled and smiled as this or that acquaintance doffed his hat, so that presently Rhoda said sarcastically, "It is plain to see why you like to come to market, Lettice."

"And why?" asked Lettice, opening her eyes.

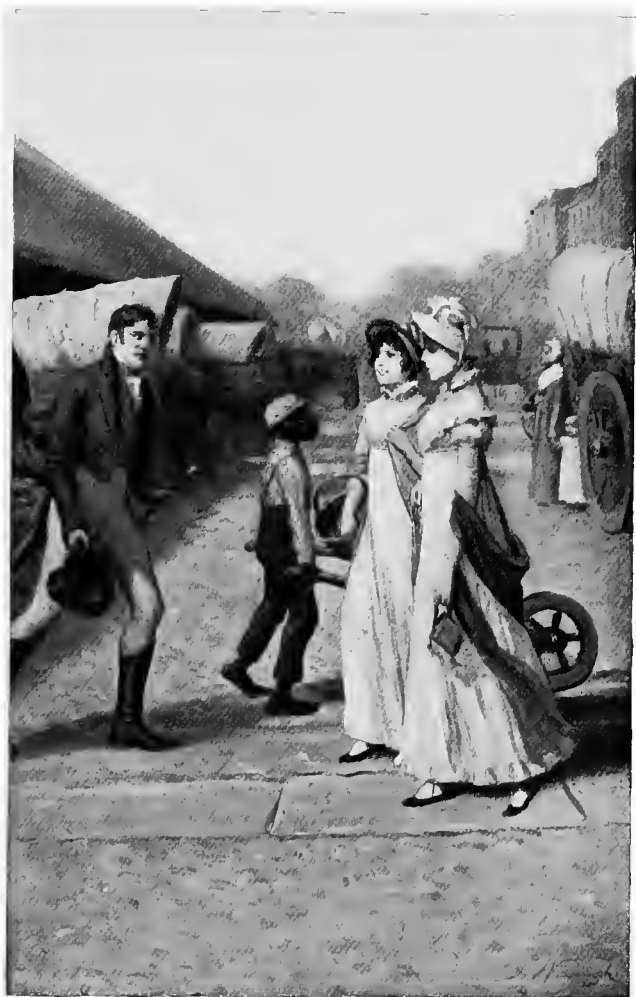
"Because of the many pretty bows you receive."

Lettice gave her head a little toss, and then asked, a trifle wickedly, "Is it then a new experience to you to count on receiving a bow from a gentleman?"

"No," returned Rhoda, somewhat nettled; "but from so many."

"Oh, so many; then you girls in Boston cannot account your acquaintances by the dozen."

"We don't want to," returned Rhoda, shortly. "We are not so lavish of our smiles as to bestow them upon every masculine we meet."



"It is plain to see why you like to come to market."

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"That's where you lose a great deal," replied Lettice, suavely. "Now, I've been taught to be sweetly polite to everybody, and my father would bow as courteously to Mrs. Flynn as to Mrs. Dolly Madison, and so would my brothers."

"You have two brothers, I believe," said Rhoda, changing the subject.

"Yes; one has not been long married and lives at our old home in eastern Maryland."

"A farm?"

"A tobacco plantation, although we raise other crops. My younger brother, James, lives there, too."

"And how old is he?"

"Old enough to be a very fitting beau for you," laughed Lettice.

Rhoda frowned, to Lettice's delight. "Why don't you say, Such frivolity! that is what Aunt Martha always says when I mention beaux. One would suppose it a wicked thing to marry or to receive a gentleman's attention. I wonder how Aunt Martha ever brought herself to the point of becoming Uncle Tom's second wife; but I believe she says he carried her by storm, and she was surprised into saying yes. How do the young men carry on such things up your way, Rhoda? Do they sit and

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tweedle their thumbs and cast sheep's eyes at you, as some of our country bumpkins do? or do they make love to the mother, as I have heard is the custom in some places?"

"Nonsense, Lettice, how your thoughts do run on such things! Is that the market?"

"Yes, and now you will see as fine a display as you could wish."

A moment after Lettice had become the careful housewife, selecting her various articles with great judgment, tasting butter, scrutinizing strawberries to be sure their caps were fresh and green, lifting with delicate finger the gills of a fish to see if they were properly red, and quite surprising Rhoda by her knowledge of and interest in articles of food.

"One would suppose you were the housekeeper," she said to Lettice. "How did you learn all those things?"

"My mother taught me some, and our old cook others. My mother considered certain matters of housekeeping the first for a girl to learn, and I hope to keep house for my father in another year, if this wretched war is over then."

"War!" replied Rhoda, scornfully. "It is so absurd to talk of war." But not many days after came the first ominous outburst of the future storm. It was

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on July 27, about twilight, that Lettice and Rhoda, who were slowly sauntering up and down the pavement, saw a crowd beginning to gather before a respectable-looking house on Charles Street.

"I wonder what can be the matter," said Lettice, pausing in her account of a fox-hunt. "Do you see yonder crowd, Rhoda?"

"Yes, let us go and find out what it means."

"Oh, no!" And Lettice, who had surprised Rhoda by telling how she could take a ditch, was not ready to cross the street to join the crowd.

"There can't be any danger," said Rhoda.

"Oh, but there is. See there, Rhoda, they are throwing stones at the windows. Oh, I see, it is the house which Mr. Hanson now occupies, since they tore down his printing-press. Oh, this is dreadful! Come, Rhoda, run, run; the crowd is growing larger; we'll be caught in the midst of it."

But Rhoda still hesitated. "Is that the gentleman whose paper my father commended?"

"Mr. Hanson? Yes, it is; he is the editor of the *Federal Republican*, and it is evident that he has written something to enrage his enemies. Come, Rhoda, do come. I am afraid we shall be hurt, and anyhow, we must not mingle in such a rabble. I'm going to run," and suiting the action to the word,

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she ran swiftly along the street toward home, Rhoda following at a slower gait.

They met their Cousin Joe hurrying toward them. Oh, Cousin Joe, Cousin Joe," cried Lettice, grasping his arm, "there is something dreadful going on! Take us home! I am scared! I don't want to see or hear what they are doing. They are throwing stones at Mr. Hanson's house, and are breaking the windows, and yelling and howling like mad! Listen! What do they mean to do? Why are they so fierce? I am so afraid some one will be killed."

"It means that war has begun," said her cousin, slowly.

"But what a way to do it!" said Rhoda, indignantly. "A rabble like that, to attack a few innocent people!"

"Innocent from your point of view, but not from the mob's."

"You uphold the mob?"

"No; but I don't uphold the utterances of the *Federal Republican*. Come home, girls, and don't poke your noses out of doors, or at least don't leave our own front doorstep."

"I'll not," cried Lettice, clinging to him. "I will go out into the garden and sit there. Where are my father and Uncle Tom?"

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"They have gone down to see Major Barney, to inquire what can be done about this disturbance. I will keep you informed about what goes on."

"Don't go back into that mob, Cousin Joe," Lettice begged. "You might get killed."

"I must see what is going on, but I will take no part in violence."

"But what would Patsey say?" Lettice asked half archly.

Joe looked down at her with a little smile. "If she is the brave girl I take her for, she'll trust to my good sense to look out for myself."

"But they are firing from the house. Listen! you can hear the reports."

Joe listened, and then he said, "I will not go too near, little cousin. I promise you that. Run in now."

"You'll come back and tell us if anything more serious happens," said Rhoda. "I wish my father were not in Washington."

"He's better off there," Joe assured her. "For my part, I am thankful he is not here."

The girls retired to the garden at the back of the house. Danny with wide-open eyes peeped out of one of the lower windows. "What's do

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matter, Miss Letty?" he asked in a loud whisper. "Is dey fightin'?"

"Yes; at least there is a riot out there. Some people are attacking the house where Mr. Hanson is—Mr. Wagner's house on Charles Street. It began by a rabble of boys throwing stones and calling names."

"Golly, but I wisht I'd been there!"

"Danny, go back to bed, and don't get up again," his mistress ordered.

Danny crawled reluctantly down from his place on the window-sill. "Whar Mars Torm?" he asked.

"He has gone down town," Lettice informed him.

Danny still hung back. "Miss Letty," he whispered. She went a few steps toward him, despite her aunt's reproving voice, "You and your Uncle Tom ruin that boy, Lettice."

"What is it, Danny?" Lettice asked.

"Ef anythin' tur'ble happen, I skeered you all gwine leave me hyar."

Lettice laughed. "There isn't anything terrible going to happen to this house, and if there should, I'll let you know, you needn't be scared, Danny."

The noise in the street increased. As yet no mili-

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tary appeared to quell the mob. Mrs. Flynn, worked up into a great state of excitement, trotted from corner to corner, coming back so often to report that it would seem as if she would wear herself out. "There be a gintleman addhressin' the crowd, Mrs. Hopkins, mum," she said.

"They do say they'll be rig'lar foightin' nixt. Glory be to Pether! but hear thim cracks av the goons!" And back she trotted to return with: "Howly mother av Moses! they're murtherin' the payple in the streets. A gintleman, be name Dr. Gale, is kilt intoirely, an' siveral others is hurthed bad, an' the crowd is runnin' in ivery direction. Do ye hear thim drooms a-beatin'? I'll be afther seein' what's that for." And out she went again.

"Come, girls, go to bed," said Mrs. Hopkins. "It is near midnight, and you can do no good by sitting up. I wish Mr. Hopkins would come in."

But neither Mr. Tom Hopkins nor his brother appeared that night, and all through their troubled slumbers the girls heard groans and hoarse cries, and the sound of a surging mass of angry men bent on satisfying their lust for revenge. Even with the dawn the horrors continued to be carried on throughout the day.

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It was not till late in the afternoon that Mr. Tom Hopkins returned home. He looked pale and troubled. "We have heard terrible reports, Uncle Tom," said Rhoda. "Is it really true that some of your most respectable citizens have been murdered by a brutal horde of lawless villains, and that they have been tortured and almost torn limb from limb?"

"I fear there is much truth in it," he replied gravely.

"Oh!" The tears welled up into Letty's eyes. "Is General Lingan killed, and General Lee? Oh, Uncle Tom, is it so dreadful as that? And where is my father?"

"He is with Major Barney. General Lingan, I fear, is killed. General Lee, I am not so sure about. I hope he is safe. There has been much wrong done, and an ill-advised mob is hard to quell, especially when it is a principle rather than a personal grudge which is involved, because it is the whole mind of the party which works with equal interest. I regret exceedingly the manner of their opposition to Mr. Hanson's paper, but—" He frowned and shook his head.

Rhoda fired up. "It is a disgrace. I should think you would feel it to be a blot on your city

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and state, that such things have been allowed by the authorities. I wish I had never come to this place, peopled by a set of villanous murderers."

"Rhoda!" Her aunt spoke reprovingly.

"I don't care." Rhoda's cheeks were flushed. "It is true. It is a dreadful, dreadful thing to murder men for saying they will not countenance a war with England."

"It is a dreadful thing," returned her uncle, "but we have many wrongs to avenge. Our poor seamen have been flogged to death, have been as brutally treated as this mob has treated the Federalists, and a desire for vengeance which will not be satisfied with less than an eye for an eye, is the motive power which has controlled these late horrible scenes. It is the first battle of our war for freedom, ill-advised as it is."

Lettice was sobbing nervously. "I want to go home, too," she cried, "I don't want to stay here, either. I want to go home, Uncle Tom. I am afraid more dreadful things will happen."

"I am afraid so, too, and I think you would all be safer and more at ease down in the country. I think, Martha, you had better take the girls and go down to Sylvia's Ramble as soon as you can get off."

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“And leave you?”

“I am safe enough; at least, if need comes, you know what I shall do.”

Mrs. Hopkins sighed and shook her head.

“At all events,” continued Mr. Hopkins, “you all will be better off in the country, and I will come down as soon as I can feel free to do so.”

Then Lettice dried her eyes, and while Rhoda was protesting that she could not go away in the absence of her father, Mr. Kendall walked in.

CHAPTER III.

On the Bay.

THE curiously indented shore of the Chesapeake Bay presents a country so full of little rivers and inlets that it is oftener easier to cut across a narrow channel by boat than to drive from one place to another. Especially is this true of the Eastern shore: in consequence, the dwellers thereon are as much at home on the water as on the land, and are famous sailors. This Rhoda soon discovered, and was filled with amazement to find that Lettice could manage a sailing vessel nearly as well as could her brothers.

It was much against Rhoda's will that she finally made ready to accompany her aunt and Lettice to the country. Her father informed her that he must return to Washington, and though she begged to be allowed to go with him, he said she would be better off in the hands of her aunt, and he would join her at Sylvia's Ramble a little later.

Mr. Tom Hopkins's plantation lay next to his

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brother's. The two formed part of an original tract granted by Lord Baltimore to an ancestor of the Hopkins family. Part of the land lay along the bay, and one or two small creeks ran up from the larger body of water, so that when one approached the houses, it seemed as if a vessel must be moored in the back yard, for tall spars shot up behind the chimneys, seemingly out of a mass of green. Rhoda's puzzled look upon being told that their destination was the next place made Lettice ask what was wrong.

"What in the world is it that looks so curious?" said Rhoda. "Aunt Martha tells me that the house is the next one, and surely that is a vessel behind it? Do you use ships for barns?"

Lettice laughed. "You will see when we get there. We don't land in the creek. Uncle Tom has a landing this side, on the bay shore. Just there it is."

Their little sailing vessel was gliding in, having passed Kent Island on the left. The fresh breeze had brought them down in a comparatively short time, and Lettice was soon scanning the small wharf to see who stood to meet them. "There's Brother James," she cried; "and I do believe it is Patsey Ringgold herself, Cousin Joe. Yes, there

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she sits on her white horse." And almost before the boat had touched the sands, Lettice was ashore, crying: "Howdy, Brother James! Howdy, Patsey. Here we are, safe and sound, and so glad to get here."

A warm color came into the face of the girl sitting on her horse ready to welcome them, and she slid down, before James could help her, to be heartily kissed and embraced by Lettice, who said: "I am dying to hear the neighborhood news, and, Patsey dear, there is so much to tell you, and I have brought a new sleeve pattern, and oh, tell me, have the gowns come home yet?"

"They are on the way," Patsey told her. "Who is the young lady, Lettice?"

"That is Rhoda Kendall, my Aunt Martha's niece, from Boston. I see Brother James is already making his manners to her."

"Yes, I have heard of her," returned Patsey; "but I wonder that she should come down here just now."

"Her father is obliged to be in Washington, and thought it safer that she should come down here with us, since there are such troubles in the city."

"Troubles, yes; and there are like to be more of

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them, if what we hear is true. Every one is talking of the war, and the planters are making ready for defence."

"And they are sending out vessels from Baltimore to chase the British cruisers; Cousin Joe—" Lettice paused, for Patsey cast an apprehensive look at the tall figure then stepping over the side of the vessel. "Cousin Joe," Lettice repeated, "will tell you all about it."

Up toward a white house set in a grove of locust trees, they all took their way, attended by an escort of negroes, big and little, who lugged along whatever was portable. Lettice linked her arm in that of her brother, when her Cousin Joe joined Patsey, and this youngest pair fell behind the rest. "You'll take me straight home, Jamie dear, won't you?" Lettice coaxed. "I do so want to see Sister Betty and the baby, and Brother William, and oh, so many things! You don't know how glad I am to get back! Does Betty make a good housekeeper, and has she changed the place much?"

"No, very little," her brother made reply; "and, yes, she is a fair housekeeper; perhaps not so good as our mother was, but Betty has some years before she will need to have great things expected of her. How is father? and what is this I hear of his going

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to join the troops? Joe says Uncle Tom is talking of going, too."

Lettice gave a little start. "I knew they talked of it, but I didn't know it meant that they would go soon. Do they really mean to join the army at once?"

"So Joe says."

"And will you go? and Brother William?" Lettice asked in visible distress.

"If we are needed. They are getting up companies everywhere, to protect the state."

Lettice gave a deep sigh, and clung closer to him. He was a pleasant-looking lad of eighteen, with curling, ruddy brown locks and fearless blue eyes, and with such a winning, careless, happy nature as caused many a little lass to give her smiles to him. "So you don't want to stay under Aunt Martha's wing any longer," he said, smiling.

"No, I'd rather be under Betty's. Does she know I am coming?"

"She expects you, and is in a twitter of delight over having you back again with us."

"Then don't let us tarry." And, indeed, she cut her good-bys very short, and with her brother was soon cutting across fields to her old home, there to be welcomed joyously by Sister Betty and the servants.

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"I declare, Letty, you grow like a weed!" was Betty's greeting as, with her baby in her arms, she came into her sister-in-law's room that evening, to watch her make her evening toilet. "Have you many pretty things?"

"A few. Aunt Martha doesn't encourage extravagance in dress." Lettice drew down the corners of her mouth and dropped her eyes in a little prim way, while Betty laughed.

"Nonsense! she is an old Puritan. It is natural for girls to like pretty things, just as it is for babies to want to catch at something bright. Isn't it, my pretty?" And Betty gave her cooing baby a hug, as he vainly tried to clutch the shining chain his mother had been dangling before him. Lettice smiled and surveyed her dainty little figure complacently, then held out her hands for the baby.

"No, don't take him now," said Betty; "he'll rumple your pretty frock. He'd rather be with his mammy than either of us, anyhow."

"Is dear old Dorcas his mammy?"

"Yes, of course; 'she done nuss de whole mess o' Hopkins, an' she right spry yet,'" replied Betty, laughing. "Come, let's go find her. William will be coming in pretty soon, and I must be ready to meet him, and oh, Lettice, I remembered how fond

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you were of buttermilk, and I told Randy to put a bucket of it down the well to keep cool for you."

Lettice gave a sigh of content and followed her sister-in-law down the broad stairway. It was so good to be at home again; to see the table set with the familiar dishes, and Speery standing there with a green branch beating away the flies. Speery giggled gleefully as she caught sight of the figure which had paused before the door. "Law, Miss Letty, yuh is a gran' young lady, sho 'nough," she said. "I mos' skeered to speak to yuh."

"You needn't be, Speery," Lettice replied, her eyes wandering over the dark mahogany furniture, and returning to take in the details of old silver and India china upon the table. "Is that one of Miss Betty's wedding presents — that pitcher? How pretty it is."

"Yass, miss, dat one o' 'em. I done fergit who given it to 'er."

"Don't forget my buttermilk, Speery," said Lettice, as she turned away.

"Naw, miss," giggled Speery. And then Lettice went out on the porch to be hugged and kissed by her big brother, she declaring that even though she could no longer lay claim to being the baby of the family, she meant to be as much of a pet as ever.

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But at the table the talk became very serious, and a cloud settled on Betty's fair brow as her husband questioned minutely as to the trouble in the city, and when, after supper, they all gathered on the porch to get the cool breezes from the bay, Betty drew very close to William, and, despite the gladness of her home-coming, Lettice felt that she was not beyond an atmosphere of anxious dread, even here in this quiet corner of the world.

Rhoda chafed at being obliged to remain in a community of fire-eaters, as she called them, to James's amusement. The lad loved to tease, and more than once brought tears of rage to Rhoda's eyes. She liked him, too; perhaps that was the reason he could so easily annoy her. His curly head was wont to appear very often over the railing of the porch at Sylvia's Ramble, and his greeting was usually, "Howdy, Miss Rhoda, have you heard the news?"

"No," Rhoda invariably returned, looking around sharply. And then James would lean indolently against the porch and gaze up at her with a beguiling expression in his eyes, and would make some such remark as, "They say Massachusetts is getting ready to secede."

Then Rhoda would turn away with a fling and say, "I don't believe a word of it!"

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"If she does, you'll stay down here with us, won't you, Miss Rhoda?" James would say, giving her one of his fetching glances. Then Rhoda would look confused, and say that she would call her aunt.

Once or twice they quarrelled in good earnest, for Rhoda pretended to despise everything which savored of the South, while James never failed to sound Maryland's praises. "You know," he said one day, "Maryland is mighty plucky. She stood out against you all in 1778, when the question of setting a limit to Western lands came up. You know she wouldn't yield an inch, and was the only one of the states that stood up for the public good against all odds. She just wouldn't, and she wouldn't join the confederation of states unless they'd come around to her way of thinking."

"Pshaw!" returned Rhoda, but half convinced. "I never heard so much talk about nothing. We never hear that discussed up our way."

"Course not," James answered. "Good reason why. Massachusetts was one of the states that held Western lands. When did she ever want to give up anything for the public good?"

"When did she? You are crazy to talk so! You forget Lexington and Bunker Hill."

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"Humph!" James's eyes twinkled. "That's what you always say. One would think you all up there had won the independence of the colonies by your two or three little skirmishes. The real battles took place farther south than New England. Precious little she suffered compared to the Southern states! We'd never have won if the South hadn't given Washington, and hadn't sent their troops and their supplies and their help of all kinds to get you out of your scrape up there. I think you are right-down ungrateful to us. Why, laws, child, you didn't know anything about fighting up there. They didn't get at it hot and heavy till the war left Massachusetts soil. You have no reason to be stuck up over your little old Bunker Hill."

"We began the war, anyhow," retorted Rhoda.

"You flatter yourselves. The Regulators in North Carolina did the starting."

"That wasn't till after our Stamp Act riot."

"Sure enough; you score one there. At all events, you would still be under England's dominion if we hadn't come to your aid; though from the looks of it, that's where you want to be, and your Bunker Hill will go for nothing."

Then Rhoda arose in a towering rage. "You

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are a detestable creature! I wish I had never seen you. If I were a man, I'd—I'd fight a duel with you, and—"

"Kill me?" said James, leaning toward her. "You can slay me now with your killing glances if you will. 'Deed, Miss Rhoda, I do love to make you mad. You are always running down Maryland, you know, and calling us fire-eaters, and it just does me good to make the sparks fly. Look around here—please look."

But Rhoda persistently kept her head turned away, perhaps to hide the tears of anger standing in her eyes. She was not to be mollified by any soft speeches.

"What are you up to, James?" called his aunt. "How you do love to tease. I don't think you will give Rhoda a very good idea of Southern gallantry."

James looked properly repentant. "'Deed, Miss Rhoda," he said softly, "I'm sorry, I'm dreadfully sorry. You're not crying?" in troubled surprise.

"No, I'm not," snapped Rhoda. And, getting up, she passed him swiftly, with head up, to enter the house.

"Sho!" exclaimed James, looking after her, "I've been and gone and done it this time, Aunt Martha. She'll never forgive me, will she?"

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"I am sure I don't know; she oughtn't to," returned Mrs. Hopkins. "You have no right to berate her native state in that way; it is very rude, to say the least."

"So it is, for a fact. It's right-down mean of me. I'll have to find some way to make up for it."

And find a way he did. First his special messenger, black Bounce, came over that afternoon with a basket of the finest peaches that Rhoda had ever seen, and next Lettice was seen galloping up the lane on her bay mare. She stopped in front of the porch where Rhoda sat sedately sewing. "Rhoda, Rhoda," cried she, "put down your work; we are going fishing, and will take supper with us, and Mr. Sam Osborne is going to let us have a dance in his new barn this evening."

Rhoda made no response, but sewed quietly on.

Lettice slipped down from her horse, and, still holding the bridle, tapped on the step with her whip. "Don't you hear, you sober sides?" she cried. "We're going fishing, and we're going to Mr. Sam Osborne's new barn for a dance. Old Hank is going to bring his fiddle. How I do love to dance! I assure you there are few things I like better. Hurry up and get ready."

"I?"

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“‘I?’ Of course you. Jamie will be here in a minute for you. He begged me to offer his excuses for sending so sudden an invitation—we only had the message from Mr. Osborne a few minutes ago—and Jamie asks that he may be your escort.”

“No, he may not,” Rhoda answered in a very dignified tone.

“And why, pray?”

“Because I don’t choose to give him the opportunity to abuse my state and to mock me.”

“Did he do that? He didn’t mean it; he was only teasing. Law me, Rhoda, he’s teased me nearly to death ever since I was born. There never was such a tease, nor such a dear boy, so all the girls say. No one can stay angry with him very long. He would be distressed to death if he thought he had really hurt your feelings. I never can stay angry with him.”

“I can.”

“Oh, well, I’ll ride back and tell him. Becky Lowe will be glad enough that you are not going. I will stop by for Becky, and we can all go together.”

She again mounted her horse, calling back as she rode off: “Better change your mind. You’ll

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miss a lot of fun." At the gate which a little darkey scrambled to open for her, she stopped and called again, "Rhoda, Rhoda, come to the steps." Rhoda hesitated, but came slowly forward. "Somebody said she'd bet a sixpence that you wouldn't go with James," Lettice said.

"Who was it?"

"Becky Lowe." And Lettice rode off, leaving Rhoda half angry, and wholly uncertain as to whether she did not regret her decided refusal.

Within the next half-hour she was sure that she did regret it. There was something very fascinating in this pleasure-seeking life of these care-free Marylanders, who gave little thought for the morrow, and gathered their delights without any compunctions, and never questioned whether, for the sake of practising self-denial, it was a duty to stay at home from any entertainment which might offer. "No one will care whether I stay or not," Rhoda told herself. "They will call me stiff and unsocial, and will be glad they are rid of me, perhaps; but — I needn't have had much to say to James if I had gone, and indeed, I might have found a way to punish him." She sighed, and sat with rather a melancholy expression, looking out upon the sparkling blue waters of the bay.

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Her reverie was broken in upon by a voice saying cheerily, "Hurry up, Miss Rhoda, I'm afraid I'm late, but I had to go around by the mill."

Rhoda arose. "Didn't Lettice tell you?" she asked in some confusion.

"That you didn't mean to go? Yes, but I knew you wouldn't be so hard-hearted as to cheat me out of an evening's pleasure, not but that it would be a very great pleasure to stay here with you."

"Why, what do you mean?"

"If you don't go, I shan't, that's all."

"Oh!" Rhoda looked at him, to see determination written on every feature, but withal a most tenderly pleading look in his eyes. "I'll go," she said faintly.

CHAPTER IV.

The Barn Frolic.

IF Rhoda doubted James's chivalric attitude toward her, she had reason to change her mind before the day was over. Her escort was all attention, and when it became evident that Becky Lowe had lost her wager, Lettice cast a merry glance at Rhoda, giving her a nod of approval. In spite of the fact that Becky was a neighbor, Lettice felt that she must champion her uncle's guest. As they stepped aboard the little vessel which was to take them on their short sail, she whispered to Patsey, "We must make Rhoda have a good time." And Patsey gave a responsive smile.

Patsey had been a little jealous of Rhoda on Joe's account, but the evident devotion of his Cousin James rather relieved her feelings in that direction, and she confessed to herself that Joe had paid Rhoda only such attentions as were becoming that he should show to a visitor in his father's house.

"Now what are we going to do?" asked Becky,

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when they were all safely aboard the graceful sailboat which, with canvas set, was speeding toward Love Point.

"We're going to Kent Island, you know," Lettice told her. "We are not going anywhere else first, are we, Birket?" She turned to address a very young gentleman at her side.

"No, miss," he returned, "so Joe Hopkins says. I was over at the Ringgold's, and Joe asked me to come along."

"But you didn't come without knowing where we were going, did you, Birket?"

The young man murmured something unintelligible, and gave his attention to the jib-boom which threatened to annihilate Rhoda, who was not used to a sailing vessel.

"You don't go sailing up your way much, do you, Miss Kendall?" Becky said. "We all down here go about on the water as much as we do on the land."

"We don't have to," Rhoda returned, a trifle defiantly. She was on the defensive since her late talk with James. She had scarcely spoken to the young man since they had started from home, but had managed to seat herself near Patsey and Joe.

"No, they don't have to up there," spoke up James. "They have good roads, and go straight at a thing

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instead of driving over roundabout ways for miles to a place not a mile off, as we have to do. I tell you that is a fine harbor they have there at Boston, Miss Rhoda! Ever been there, Becky?"

"No, you know I haven't!" she returned with some vexation.

"And it's a beautiful coast," James went on; "rocky, you know; not sandy like ours. It certainly seems right pretty after our level country, where we go miles on a stretch without so much as one little hill to break the monotony."

Becky was silenced for the time, but she had shafts in reserve. She resented the presence of this fair-haired Northern girl. What business had she down there usurping Becky's own right to an admirer? Lettice watched the manœuvres of Miss Becky with sly glances at Patsey. Lettice herself was entirely heart-free. She was too young to be greatly troubled by affairs of sentiment, although she had twice imagined herself violently in love; once with a young gentleman who had passed an evening at her uncle's, and who had made himself particularly agreeable to her; even now she liked to think about him, wondering if she should ever see him again. He was from New York, she remembered, and she became so absorbed in her recollections of him, that she did not

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notice the youthful cavalier who stood waiting to help her ashore.

"Lettice is going to stay where she is," laughed Becky; "she doesn't care to dance, you know, nor does she care for supper."

"Don't I?" cried Lettice, on her feet at once. "I do care. Your hand, Birk, and I'll be ashore before any one;" which indeed she was, and stood laughing to greet the others as each made the landing.

A supper of oysters, crabs, biscuits, and such-like Maryland dainties, was eaten merrily enough. Rhoda was a little reserved, but chatted pleasantly with Patsey, Joe, and the one or two whom she knew; Lettice was full of fun, and was as sportive as a kitten, ready to go crabbing, or to row out into the creek whose waters reflected a gorgeous sunset sky, to tease her Cousin Joe, or her Brother James, till finally she dropped down on the sands in quite a thoughtful mood, listening to Becky's lazy voice as she inquired of Rhoda, "Do you go fox-hunting, Miss Kendall?"

"No, I do not," was the reply. "I ride sometimes, but we are not much given to the chase."

"Oh!" Becky lifted her eyebrows. "It's very exciting, and we all think it's great fun. Shall

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you stay long enough to go this fall when the season begins?"

"I hardly know; it will depend upon my father's plans. He is in Washington now."

"Is he getting ready to fight?"

"I hope not," Rhoda returned severely.

"Oh, don't you want war? We all do; we think it must come. Isn't it funny, Mr. Dean? Miss Kendall doesn't approve of the war."

"That's because she's from Massachusetts," Mr. Dean made reply, having reasons of his own for wanting to please Miss Becky.

Rhoda bit her lip, but James came to the rescue. "Look here," he said; "it seems to me that it's pretty early to be flinging at Massachusetts. The war's hardly begun, and if she wants to be cautious, what's that to us? I think her Revolutionary record will stand investigation. We know well enough how she gave everything to the cause; her men didn't spare themselves, neither did her women. I say it's too early, Dean, to criticise." He had moved closer to Rhoda, and she looked up at him gratefully. "Perhaps we are the ones who are wrong, after all," James continued.

Stephen Dean gave a low whistle. "Whew!"

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he exclaimed, "I thought you were hot foot for war."

"So I am; but that isn't saying that I'm infallible, is it? If we get whipped, maybe we'll wish we hadn't been quite so peart in stirring up old England — Hallo! there's a boat coming in. It's your father, Miss Rhoda, and Uncle Tom, and a stranger."

The small vessel containing the new arrivals now gracefully approached the landing, and in a moment Rhoda was welcoming her father, Joe was rapidly putting questions, while before Lettice, who was standing shyly apart, was bowing the young gentleman of her dreams. "Fair Miss Lettice, this is a very happy meeting," said young Mr. Robert Clinton. "I am fortunate to have arrived in time for a jubilee. What is the occasion? a birthday?"

"No special occasion; it is but one of the frolics we often have. Mr. Sam Osborne has built a new barn, and the young people in the neighborhood are going to have a dance there this evening. We have just been having a crab supper."

"Am I too late for scraps?"

"No, there is an abundance left. I will order Bounce to get you all something."

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"Don't run away."

"I will come back. I must see if my father sent me a message." She approached her Uncle Tom, having stopped to bid Bounce serve the gentlemen with the best that was left of the feast.

"Free trade and sailor's rights! that is the cry," her uncle was saying, and on the other side, Mr. Kendall replied, "As our great Josiah Quincy says, sir, 'we're not going to be kicked into a war.' Sailor's rights, indeed! Where is your navy?"

"There," Mr. Hopkins waved his hand toward the blue Chesapeake dotted with the white sails of her schooners and clippers.

Mr. Kendall smiled sarcastically. "And your marines?"

"Here," returned Mr. Hopkins, indicating the party of sunburnt young men before them. "Think you, sir, that we shall endure the heel of England upon our necks? You may be willing meekly to accept her abuse for the sake of the profit that will accrue from swallowing her insults, but we of the South are of a different mould."

"Your John Randolph is not so eager to voice your cry of free trade and sailor's rights."

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"But our Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun do voice it."

"Politics! Politics!" cried Lettice. "Just a short rest from them, Uncle Tom. Will you and Mr. Kendall partake of some refreshments, and leave politics till another time? It seems to me that you will find it vastly more agreeable to discuss a devilled crab. Uncle Tom, did you bring me any message from my father?"

"His love, and he will see you before we are ordered off."

"Ordered off! Oh, Uncle Tom, you are really going to join the troops?"

"Yes."

"What is the news from Canada, father?" Rhoda asked.

"What might have been expected," he returned; "Hull has surrendered."

"Oh, do you mean General William Hull?"

"That's the man."

Rhoda cast a triumphant glance at James who had joined them, and the lad flushed angrily. "Is that really true, or is it only a report?" he asked his uncle.

"Too true," he answered; "but," laying his hand on the boy's shoulder, "we shall have need of you yet, Jamie. We are disgusted, but not defeated,

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for another Hull has given us a glorious victory on the sea to offset our defeat on land."

"What's that, sir? We haven't heard the news yet."

"You might have heard it fast enough, if you had been a little nearer to Baltimore, for they fired salutes in honor of the news, and every ship in the harbor ran up her flag. Captain Isaac Hull has taken the *Guerrière* as a prize into Boston, and the whole country is jubilant."

"The *Guerrière*? Dacres's ship? Then Hull has won his hat," James cried. "Hurrah for Hull and the old *Constitution*!"

"What's that about a hat?" Lettice asked.

"Why, Dacres and Hull laid a wager of a hat, each declaring that he would whip the other if they ever met on the high seas, and old Hull has won." And James struck up a song written by Mr. Francis Hopkinson and called "The Favorite New Federal Song," although we know it now as "Hail Columbia."

"And you, sir?" said Lettice to Mr. Clinton, who, with a devilled crab in one hand and a sandwich in the other, was about to throw himself at her feet. "You, Mr. Clinton, what do you think of this war question?"

THE BARN FROLIC.

"It's all nonsense!" he exclaimed with an amused glance at her. "Surely, Miss Lettice, a pretty girl doesn't need to bother her head about loans, taxes, navies, and war news."

Lettice regarded him gravely. "I am, not so sure about that," she rejoined. "I don't really know all about it, but I don't think the British have any right to steal our sailors."

"And what do you think of the letters-of-marque and reprisal? And will you favor me with your opinion on carrying trade and the constructive blockade?"

Lettice looked bewildered, and Mr. Clinton laughed. "I did but tease you, fair demoiselle. 'Tis not for ladies to bother their heads about such things; what concerns them more is a question of a becoming gown or a new dancing step. What, by the way, is this that I hear of a dance in a barn? May I hope to have the honor?"

"Yes, if you like."

"The first?"

"That is promised," returned Lettice, reluctantly.

"The second, then?"

"That, too."

"The third, then?"

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"I told my Cousin Joe that I would give him that, but —"

"Since he is your cousin, perhaps I can persuade him to exchange places with me, if you will allow."

"Oh! ye-es," Lettice replied, trying to cover her first exclamation of eagerness by a little show of reluctance. "If you like, you can settle it with Cousin Joe. I don't care."

Her uncle was watching her amusedly. "Don't go over to the enemy, Letty," he said as she passed him.

"No fear of that," she replied, laughing, but with a little fluttering at heart. What was the use of a girl's bothering about politics, after all, she thought; even James had said that perhaps a war was not right, and—yes, of course she was what her father was, but that didn't mean she could not have friends on the other side. Look at Mr. Kendall and her Uncle Tom, they were brothers-in-law and friends, yet they didn't agree. So she put all disturbing questions aside, and danced her prettiest with this new gallant, feeling that she was the envy of the older girls, for no one was led out more gracefully than she, though all the neighborhood was famous for its good dancers. The

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tobacco barn with its big floor was a fine place for a dance, and the courtseyings and dippings and bowings went on till all hours. The fashion of round dances had not yet reached the place, and more stately measures were used.

"Across there, where you see the lights twinkling, is Annapolis," Lettice told Mr. Clinton on their homeward voyage. She had turned a cold shoulder on Birket Dean, and was listening with evident pleasure to the new^comer's low-spoken words. "It was from there the *Constitution* sailed, only last month; we saw her go out. I wonder what will be the next news," she said in one of the pauses of the conversation.

"Still troubling your pretty head with such matters?" returned Mr. Clinton, smiling at her. "Rather let us speak of yonder moon sailing so serenely across the heavens." And he began to quote poetry to her, till she did indeed forget war's alarms.

Lounging at Rhoda's feet, James every now and then turned his curly head toward the slim girl figure. She was very kind to him on this homeward trip, and they did not once get into an argument.

Joe and Patsey sat suspiciously close together.

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They were both very quiet. "If I were going to be married at Christmas, I wonder if I should find no more to talk about than Joe and Patsey," Lettice thought. But she did not know that the wedding day was an indefinite matter, and that Joe had just informed his sweetheart that he should, in a few days, take command of one of his father's clippers, and that his business would be to harass English vessels whenever he could. "I'd like to meet that wretched thief who stole Pat Flynn," he said; "I'd make him suffer for it." But Patsey was silent. Privateering for her Joe! The uncertainty of the sea was bad enough, but add to that the dangers of warfare, and it was too much. The girl's heart was very full; she could only let her hand lie in Joe's strong clasp, and be thankful for the present, for the future seemed suddenly to slip into an impenetrable cloud.

At first Joe had urged an immediate marriage, but Patsey shook her head. "You'll be back by Christmas?" she faltered.

"Surely, unless —" His clasp on Patsey's hand tightened, and he had no further words.

The little craft rounded Love's Point and turned into the waters of the Chester River. "Your uncle promises me some rare sport during the shooting

THE BARN FROLIC.

season down here. The country is a very paradise, not only because of its delights, but because of the angelic beings who dwell here," Mr. Clinton remarked sentimentally to Lettice.

"Angels?" laughed Lettice. "Do you perhaps mean ghosts? The darkies are dreadfully afraid of them, and won't go near our graveyard."

"Have you a special graveyard of your own?"

"Yes, haven't you? Ours is such a quiet, dim little corner of the plantation. It is all moss-grown, and the trees are so thick and green there."

"Will you show it to me some day?"

"Yes, if you like; but I don't believe I'd care to go there at night myself."

"Not if I were with you? Surely, you'd not be afraid then."

"You couldn't keep off haunts," returned Lettice. "Don't let's talk of them, it makes me creepy. I like the place in the daytime, when the sun shines in between the leaves and flickers down on the headstones. It is pleasant to go there then, and lie in the long grass, only I always like to have Lutie, even then."

"And who is Lutie?"

"My maid. She belonged to my mother, and was given to me when I was born."

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“And your mother?”

“She lies in the graveyard; so does my little sister. My eldest brother’s headstone is there, too.” Lettice gave a sigh; she always did when she spoke of this brother; a wild young fellow who had been a trial to his family, and who one day set off for Norfolk with a set of roistering fellows, as feather-brained as himself, and had fallen overboard. A stone to his memory had been set up in the family burying-ground, although his body had never been recovered. This loss was the shock which hastened his mother’s death, and the family rarely spoke of him.

Just then the old darkey who had been playing such tunes as “Cooney in de Holler” and “Jim along o’ Josey” struck up a plaintive melody on his fiddle. They were nearing home. Overhead a waning moon was low in the heavens, athwart which, now and then, sped a meteor; all was still, save for the lapping of waves against the sides of the boats or the sound of the light breeze in the sails. One could not realize that soon from shore to shore would reverberate the cannon’s booming, and that terror would overspread the fair and quiet land.

CHAPTER V.

Some Coquetries.

WHILE the long summer days lasted, Robert Clinton remained a guest at Mr. Tom Hopkins's. It was a pet scheme of Rhoda's father that she should marry the young New Yorker, and he trusted to his sister to further the scheme; yet, as is so often the case, neither of the two most concerned seemed to evince any great heartiness in the matter. Rhoda, as was proper, received from Mr. Clinton such attentions as he was bound to pay to the niece of his hostess, but there was scarcely a day that did not see him riding down the road toward the neighboring plantation of Mr. William Hopkins, with the excuse to Mr. Kendall that Will Hopkins had promised him a young hound, and he wanted to look after the training of the animal, or he and James were going crabbing or sailing.

On one of the days in the latter part of the summer, Lettice was sitting on a sunken gray slab in the old graveyard, with Lutie lying at her feet

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in the tall grass. Lettice was soberly setting neat stitches in a delicate bit of cambric. There were many things on her mind, and she had fled to this quiet spot for reflection. She was silent so long that at last Lutie raised a timid voice, "Huccome yuh so qui't, Miss Letty?"

"Because I want to think," returned Lettice.

Lutie raised herself on her elbow and peeped through the thicket of green; just beyond in the garden old Unc' Eph'am was pottering about, watering the flowers, which he did, rain or shine. It was his only duty; and since the old man was fast losing his wits, but still retained his habits, he never failed to give the flowers their daily watering, whether they needed it or not. "Dey a gemp'an comin' up de lane, Miss Letty," drawled Lutie.

"Is there?" A faint little blush tinged Lettice's cheek.

"Yass, miss. He dat dan'ified Mars Clinton, dat ain't nuvver rid behin' de houn's, Jubal say."

"Jubal is a goose."

"Is yuh gwine to de house, Miss Letty? Shall I fetch yo book and yo wuck-bag?"

A smile flickered around Lettice's lips. "No," she answered, "I am going to stay here."

SOME COQUETRIES.

Lutie sighed, and sank back again in the grass; she didn't "y'arn fo' de grabeyard" at any time, and hoped for an excuse which would set her free to go elsewhere. Lettice looked at her with an amused expression. "I believe you are scared to stay here, even in the daytime, Lutie," she remarked.

"No, ma'am, Miss Letty, I ain't 'zactly skeert, but I feels kin o' creepy when I sees yuh a-settin' on yo gre't gran'daddy grabe."

"I don't see why."

"Kase he de one dat ha'nt de place," replied Lutie, in a whisper.

"Nonsense! I don't believe it at all."

"Yass, miss, he do so; he go on tur'ble, Jubal say, uvver since Mars Torm go 'way."

"Hush, Lutie," said Lettice, peremptorily. "I don't like such talk."

Lutie looked properly abashed and sought to change the subject. "Is yuh skeert o' Poly Bony-part, Miss Letty?"

"No; why should I be?"

"'Cause he a—a—. He mos' wuss an' anybody. He got gre't big eyes, an' he tall as a tree, an' he cuts off folkses haid if dey dar's look at him, an' he go rampagin' roun' an' kills folks fo' fun.

A HEROINE OF 1812.

Yuh reckon he uvver come dis way, Miss Letty? When Jubal tell me 'bout him, I so skeert I pulls up de kivers when I goes to baid, an' I keeps mah haid un'er dem, an' I jes' shivers an' shakes."

"And let your feet stick out where he can see them; that's what you always do," Lettice observed.

"Law, Miss Letty!" Lutie sat up in alarm. "Yuh talks lak you 'spected him."

Lettice's peal of laughter discovered her whereabouts to a rather annoyed young man who had been sauntering up and down the porch while a couple of small negroes scudded upstairs and down in a vain search for the young lady, and before Lettice was aware of his presence, Robert Clinton looked over the hedge, exclaiming triumphantly: "Ah, here you are; and this is the graveyard that you would never show me. I might have known that you would be in hiding here."

"I'm not in hiding," Lettice replied, rising to her feet. "It is one of my favorite retreats, as I told you; and if you had paid the heed to my words that you pretend, you would have remembered."

The young man looked rather disconcerted.

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"But, you know, you have always refused to come here with me, and how was I to know the way?"

"You could have asked."

"May I come in now?" he inquired humbly.

"I don't think my father would object," Lettice returned demurely, and the young man vaulted the hedge instantly. "You should have gone around; at the other side there is an opening," Lettice told him.

"I didn't see it. This is an interesting spot, isn't it?" he said, throwing himself down by her side. "What fair, sweet flowers grow here; but the fairest of all—"

"Lutie," cried Lettice, "there's that old turkey-hen now. I saw her run out from behind Theophilus Hopkins's grave. Go head her off. Excuse me, Mr. Clinton, you were saying something about flowers."

"I was saying," he returned, a little put out, "that you have planted some very pretty flowers in here."

"Oh, yes; we like to keep the place as pretty as we can. Come, we will go over there on the other side of the hedge by that big tree. I have been in here long enough. Was it warm riding over?"

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"Yes, more than warm, hot; but there's a refreshing breeze from the creek just here; I'd like to take you out there."

Lettice looked at him with a twinkle in her eye. "You mean you would like me to take you out there. You can't sail a boat."

"I can row."

"On this hot afternoon? No, sir."

"Am I never to see you alone for as much as half an hour?"

"Why should you?"

"Because I — Do you know what keeps me down here?"

"Politics, I suppose," returned Lettice, suavely. "I suppose you are waiting to hear what Mr. Kendall will report when he next comes from Washington, and if it is news to your liking, you will start home, and Rhoda — By the way, how is Rhoda?"

"She is well. I left her with your brother on the porch."

"Jamie is a dear lad. So that is why you came over, because your devoirs to Miss Rhoda were interrupted by my brother?"

"Now, Miss Lettice, you know my firmament contains but one ruling star, and that is —"

"Not there, Lutie," Lettice cried. "I'll come

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and help you, or she'll get away. Excuse me, Mr. Clinton, but I must help Lutie with that turkey-hen; she is so wild, and has a brood in the bushes. If she once gets off in the woods, there'll be no catching her again," and off she started. Then, after many flappings of her sunbonnet to shoo the turkey-hen, and many beatings about the blackberry bushes, the creature was headed off, and Lutie was bidden to call Anstice Ann to come and help to drive her up. Then Lettice returned to her visitor. "You were saying something about stars, weren't you, or was it meteors? Are you versed in astronomy? What is our evening star just now?"

"I know but one, and that is a lode-star which is both morning and evening star to me."

"Gracious! you're like those children of Israel, aren't you? Oh, no, I mean — What do I mean? Did you ever go to camp-meeting?"

"No, I never had that experience."

"Then you must go; your education has been sadly neglected, for you don't know about lots of the things that we do. We always go over to Wye Camp."

"Perhaps I shall not be here when it begins."

"Oh, shall you not? I thought you were to stay to learn to ride after the hounds."

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"Learn to ride ! Do you suppose I never mounted a horse ? "

"No, indeed ; but you've never been fox-hunting. I expect you will enjoy it."

"If the fox is as elusive as —"

"As what ? " Lettice looked up saucily.

The young man caught her hand. "You know who eludes me and defies me and makes miserable my days and nights, and makes me advance and retreat till I am driven to distraction."

"No, does she ? What a wicked girl Rhoda is. I never dreamed she could be so cruel. Thank you, I do not need your hand to assist me to rise."

"You will not leave me yet ? Just one moment more. I have not spoken to you alone for so long, and you are so good to give me this opportunity."

"I give it ? What do you mean, sir ? " Lettice's blue eyes grew dark with disapproval.

"You sent off your maid, you know," he murmured deprecatingly.

"That you might speak to me alone ? You are mistaken, sir ; it was all on account of the turkey-hen ; I had forgotten your existence."

"Forgive me."

"I will try to ; but I am sorry I cannot listen to your confidences about Rhoda. I forgot entirely

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that I promised Sister Betty that I would see to the syllabub."

"You know it isn't Rhoda," persisted the young man.

"Oh, isn't it? Well, never mind; it is Becky Lowe, probably. She told me you were there last week. No, another time. You will excuse me, I know, and I shall see you at tea time. There comes Brother William, if your call was upon him. He will be glad to see you. Adieu." And Lettice, with work-bag dangling from her wrist, and Moore's poems under her arm, ran swiftly up the garden walk to the house. She held her sun-bonnet closely together, and her hands were covered with long sheepskin mittens, lest the sun should mar the whiteness of her skin. Her sister Betty met her by the grape arbor; she was similarly protected, and had a light basket on her arm.

"Law, Lettice, what makes you run in the sun?" she said. "Why didn't you come around the other way?"

"I wanted the shortest way," returned Lettice, panting a little, and letting go the strings of her bonnet.

Betty looked at her quizzically. "I don't believe

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I ever ran from a young gentleman in my life," she said, laughing. "You ought to be ashamed to be such a scare-cat, Letty." Then she seized the sides of the girl's bonnet and looked fixedly at her. "Lettice Hopkins, are you going 'way off to New York with that Tory? Do you mean to separate yourself from your family and become an English subject?"

"'Deed I'm not, Sister Betty."

"Then go 'long into the house, and don't make yourself look too bewitching at supper. I finished the syllabub myself. There comes Birk Dean. After all, perhaps you'd better not put on your least becoming frock." And Lettice ran up to her room, pouting.

It was not long before Lutie followed, and, after much indecision and the turning over of many gowns, Lettice was finally arrayed in a blue tissue, made with a very short waist and a skimp skirt, and around her shoulders was thrown a scarf of India muslin. She descended the stairs demurely, and walked out upon the porch, where her two admirers sat looking daggers at each other.

"Since I leave the neighborhood to-morrow, perhaps you will honor me with your company for a walk," said Mr. Clinton.

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Lettice gave a quick side glance at Birket. "I came over to see if you'd ride to camp this evening, Miss Lettice," said Birket, blushing to the roots of his hair.

"Has camp begun?" Lettice asked; then with a little laugh, "I can't walk and ride both, can I?" She turned her smiling face to first one and then the other. "I will tell you what we will do: we'll get Brother William to let us have the big wagon and the mules, and all go over in a party; that will be much the best way. Supper is ready, gentlemen. Mr. Clinton, will you escort Sister Betty? She is just here waiting for you to give her your hand." And in the pretty old-fashioned way they were led out to supper.

"Mr. Clinton leaves us, Brother William. Did you say to-morrow?" said Lettice, turning to the young man.

"I am going up with Mr. Kendall to Washington," he answered, without a smile.

"He will miss the fox-hunting, won't he, Brother William? I thought that was what you came down here for." She turned again to Mr. Clinton.

"Washington isn't so far away but that he can come back again," said William. "That's what

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you intend to do, of course." He turned to his guest.

"Perhaps," he replied, giving a meaning glance at Lettice, who hastened to say lightly, "Then it is not a long farewell." And she turned her attention to young Birket Dean, who was mightily complacent in consequence.

During the entire evening Lettice chose to ignore Mr. Clinton, whom she relegated to a place by Rhoda's side when the big wagon-load of young folks started to camp-meeting. It was no new experience to any of them except to Rhoda and to Robert Clinton, who viewed the proceedings with interest and with some wonder; they were not used to seeing such exhibitions of religious excitement at their own homes. But instead of camp-meeting hymns, on their way back, the young people started up such war-songs as:—

"Too long our tars have borne in peace
With British domineering;
But now they've shown that trade should cease,
For vengeance they are steering.
First gallant Hull, he was the lad
Who sailed a tyrant hunting,
And swaggering Dacres soon was glad
To strike to striped bunting."

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"Why don't you sing?" Lettice asked Mr. Clinton, with fun in her eyes. "Rhoda says you have a right pretty voice. And you, Rhoda, are silent, too. What is the matter? One would suppose the same complaint had seized the two of you and given you husky throats."

"Well, you see, I know Dacres," Mr. Clinton began.

"He knows Dacres! Think of it, girls!" said Lettice, bent on teasing. "How proud he must be of the acquaintance."

"I am proud. He is a gallant, brave fellow," returned Mr. Clinton, in some heat.

"But that didn't save him from getting whipped," Lettice chanted in glee. "Let us make our manners, ladies and gentlemen, to a friend of Lieutenant Dacres, who is a friend of England, consequently no friend of ours."

"Now, Lettice," Rhoda interposed, "don't stir every one up."

"You called for a song," cried Robert Clinton, springing to his feet. "We will give you one. Join in, Miss Rhoda." And he began:—

"Huzza for our liberty, boys,
These are the days of our glory;
The days of true national joys,
When terrapins gallop before ye.

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There's Porter and Grundy and Rhea
In Congress, who manfully vapor,
Who draw their six dollars a day,
And fight bloody battles on paper.
Ah, this is true Terrapin war."

But before they had proceeded very far with their song, every lad in the wagon was on his feet, and the Terrapin war was drowned out by the lusty singing of:—

"Firm as our native hills we stand,
And should the lords of Europe land,
We'll meet them on the furthest strand;
We'll conquer, or we'll die!"

And the discord of the two different songs striking the quiet of the night, as they passed the farm-houses along the way, brought more than one person to the gate to see what was this noisy crowd.

Hospitable, polite, and ready as they were to offer their best to a guest, the young men of the party showed some coolness to Robert Clinton when they made their adieux; but Lettice, with a pricking of conscience at having brought about the condition of affairs which led to the situation, felt sorry for the young man, and, leaning down from the wagon as it stopped at her Uncle Tom's gate, she said in

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a soft whisper, "You'll be over to-morrow to say good-by, won't you?"

The young man, with a sudden lifting of the gloom on his face, whispered back eagerly, "May I come?" But the noise of the wagon as it rumbled off drowned Lettice's answer, if she made any.

CHAPTER VI.

A Ball.

BY the time the summer was over, many of Lettice's friends had left the neighborhood. Rhoda had gone to Washington to join her father, who was still detained in the capital city. Mr. Clinton, too, was there. In October both Mr. Tom Hopkins and Lettice's father marched away to the Canada border, and among the armed vessels which Baltimore sent out to annoy the enemy was one commanded by Joe Hopkins ; this had started down the Chesapeake in August, and Patsey was wistfully looking for news from her absent lover. Betty's pleadings had kept her husband at home, so far ; and Jamie, although he threatened each day to follow his father, still lingered.

"You'd better stay at home and protect us," Betty and Lettice would say. "Suppose the enemy should come up the Chesapeake, where would we be ? And if I were left a young widow, William, think how sad," Betty would say as a final argument.

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"I think I will go to sea with Cousin Joe when he comes back," James at last concluded. "I tell you we're licking the British on the water, whatever we may be doing on land. Commodore Barney captured fifteen vessels in the forty-five days he was running along the coast, and news has come that the *Wasp* has captured the *Frolic*, and the *United States* has the *Macedonian*, if last reports are correct."

"Good!" cried Lettice. "I wonder how Rhoda likes that."

James looked down, and with the toe of his boot rolled over one of the hounds at his feet; then he looked up, saying, "And Robert Clinton, how do you suppose he takes it?"

Lettice gave her head a little toss. "What do I care how he takes it! Is there news from Canada, Brother William?"

"No good news. We must be content with our victories at sea, for the present. Our little state has nothing to be ashamed of in her naval exploits."

Just then the smart rap of a whip-handle on the door announced a visitor, and Birket Dean walked in. "I was coming this way, Miss Lettice," he said, after greeting them all, "and I brought along this letter that came for you on one of the boats."

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"A letter?" Lettice eagerly held out her hand, and tore open the letter fastened with seals, for as yet envelopes were unknown. She gave her attention to the closely written pages, then looked up, and said animatedly: "Oh, brother! oh, Sister Betty, Rhoda wants me to come to Washington for a visit! I should so love to go to see the President and Mrs. Madison, and oh, do say I may go!"

"Alone?" returned her brother William, smiling. "You wouldn't expect me to leave Betty and the baby to take you, would you?"

"Jamie could take me. You would like nothing better, would you, Jamie?"

"I'd like to, yes; but—"

"Oh, well, never mind; I can go as far as Baltimore with Aunt Martha, and she can find some one in whose charge to place me. I will see Aunt Martha this very evening."

"Will you ride over with me?" Birket asked eagerly.

"Yes, if you will stay to supper. Here, Jamie, I know you are dying to see this, and as there are no secrets in it, you may as well have the pleasure of perusing it." And Lettice tossed her letter to her brother James.

It was a lovely ride down the road in the hush of

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an October evening ; the landscape, taking on an autumnal hue, showed a soft envelopment of purple mist. To the right lay the blue bay, across which dimly appeared the spires of the little town of Annapolis.

"It is truly a beautiful scene," said Lettice, gazing around her. She looked like a bit of autumn herself in her scarlet jacket, and with the shining wing of a swamp blackbird in her hat. She had, it is true, some compunctions in accepting the wing, being of a most tender heart. Birket had given it to her, and quieted her protests by telling her how the thieving birds had stolen the corn and must be shot, if the crops must be protected. "Better that than to have them caught by a prowling beast, for we shoot them and they die instantly, otherwise who knows but that they may suffer tortures."

Lettice had stroked the bright feathers thoughtfully, saying, "Since he is dead, I may as well wear his feathers, but bring me no more, Birk ; it makes me sad to see them."

"And how about the foxes ?" Birket had said.

"Ah, the foxes, they are thieves, too ; but I always shut my eyes when the hounds pounce on them. 'Tis a pity the world is not big enough for us and them, too."

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The conversation had taken place a day or two before, for Birket was a frequent visitor. His father's plantation lay on the other side of Mr. William Hopkins's, but on account of the wriggings in and out of a little creek, it was easier reached by water than by land.

"It is a truly lovely scene," Lettice repeated.

"And yet you want to leave it," Birket returned reproachfully.

"So I do, for I love new scenes, and Rhoda says there are many gay doings at the capital."

"It is not much of a place," Birket remarked; "not near so fine as Baltimore."

"No, of course not. Baltimore is the third city in the Union. Nevertheless, seeing that I have been to Baltimore and have never been to Washington, I shall like to go to the least familiar place."

"Mr. Clinton is there?" Birket asked hesitatingly.

Lettice gave her horse a gentle flick with her whip. "I don't know," she said shortly, as the horse changed his walk to a canter.

A few weeks later saw the two girls, Lettice and Rhoda, together in Washington, Aunt Martha having readily found an escort for Lettice in the person of one Mr. Francis Key, whose affability and courtesy lessened the tedium of the long trip, for it was a

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day's journey by coach from Baltimore to Washington.

Dark though it was when Lettice arrived, she could perceive that Washington had little pretensions to being a fine place. After leaving the busy city of Baltimore, with its forty thousand inhabitants, its streets bright with lamps and full of the noise of rushing feet, of singing sailors, and rumbling carts, Washington, where scarce more than five thousand persons dwelt, seemed little more than a village, full of mud-holes, and showing a small number of houses at scattered distances. Lettice, however, was not to stay in Washington, for after the coach had rattled over the newly laid pike, and she had dimly discerned the white walls of the unfinished Capitol, she was helped down from her seat and entered a hackney coach, which was driven up and down hill, over Rock Creek, through mud and mire, until it arrived in Georgetown, a more habitable place than that which they had just left. Comfortable, spacious houses stood to the right and left of them — houses which to-day, dingy and dilapidated, give small evidence of having witnessed the brilliant scenes once of frequent occurrence within their walls.

Lettice was welcomed with more heartiness than she had expected from the reserved Rhoda, and she

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parted with her kind escort, after many thanks for his thoughtful attentions.

"You must be sadly weary, Lettice," said Rhoda, as she led her friend upstairs to a room overlooking the blue Potomac. "I well remember how fatigued I was when I arrived; but I hope you will soon get over your journey's effects, for there are to be fine doings here next week, and you must be in your best trim. Did you bring your prettiest gowns?"

"I did, indeed, and a new one is to be sent as soon as the mantua-maker has it finished. Are you having a good time here, Rhoda?"

"Fairly pleasant, though the wretched war stirs up all sorts of ill feeling, and one never knows what will happen, or what unpleasant things one may hear; yet I have much less to stand than the President's wife, and should not complain."

"The President's wife, Mrs. Dolly Madison? Is any one so churlish as to show ill-will toward her?"

"Indeed, yes. She is sometimes treated with much discourtesy, because they impute all the woes of the country to her husband."

"As if she could help that! What gumps some people be! And have you seen Mrs. Madison, Rhoda? Do you know her?"

A BALL.

"I have met her several times, and she is a charming lady."

"And your beaux, Rhoda? What of them?" The two girls looked at each other, and both blushed faintly; then Lettice, summoning up courage, asked, "Are you promised to Mr. Clinton, Rhoda?"

Rhoda looked down and answered faintly, "Not yet."

Lettice gave her head a little toss, and a haughty look came into her dark blue eyes. "You mean that you could be if you wanted?"

"My father wishes it very much." Rhoda's eyes were still downcast.

"Your father? And how about you and the gentleman himself?"

"I don't know."

"Oh, you don't?" There was some consolation in this, Lettice thought, and she determined to watch for herself.

The capital, raw and incomplete as it looked, still furnished more gayeties than Lettice found at home. Here were gathered the statesmen of the day, and the girl was all eagerness to have this or that important personage pointed out to her. Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun, John Randolph of Roanoke, a great friend of Lettice's late travelling companion,

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Mr. Frank Key, and many other distinguished men were to be seen in the city during the session of Congress. The appearance of some of these rather disappointed Lettice. She thought the President a very insignificant person for so great an office, she wrote home to James, and Mr. Randolph was the oddest looking man she had ever seen.

"There is to be a great ball at Tomlinson's hotel," was one of the first pieces of news that Rhoda gave her friend.

"And shall we go?" Lettice asked.

"I am not sure. My father, you know, disapproves of the war, but —"

"Mine doesn't," Lettice interrupted triumphantly, "and perhaps I can get some one to take me. Should you mind if I did, Rhoda?"

"I should like to go, too," Rhoda returned, "for there will be a most distinguished company present: the President and Mrs. Madison, the Secretaries, and — oh, everybody. It is to be in honor of the capture of the *Guerrière* and the *Alert*."

"We must go, if there is any way," Lettice cried. "Rhoda, tell me, do you really feel so incensed at the idea of a war as you pretend?"

Rhoda did not answer at once, and then she said slowly, "I think with my father that it is unwise;

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but once in it, I think we should do our best to win."

"Good!" cried Lettice. "I'd like to tell Brother James that."

"Your brother James?" Rhoda repeated a little unsteadily. "Has he gone to the war?" She had not made any inquiry about him, and Lettice had wickedly refrained from mentioning him.

"He hasn't gone, exactly. He belongs to the militia, and so does Brother William, but James says when Cousin Joe comes back he intends to join him, for he prefers service at sea."

"Your cousin Joe, then, has not come back yet? And his marriage, is it postponed?"

"He has not returned, and the marriage has to be put off indefinitely. Poor dear Patsey! All those pretty gowns waiting for her wedding day, and she does not know when she can wear them! Cousin Joe made one short trip, and then came back to Baltimore. He started out again, but not a word has been heard from him."

"Poor Patsey!" Rhoda looked very thoughtful for a moment; then she jumped up from the stiff chair in which she was sitting. "I'll write a note, Lettice," she said. "I don't doubt we can go to the ball if you so desire it. I have friends at court, even if my

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father does not uphold the administration. I can write to Mrs. Paul Hamilton, who knew my mother well, and has been most kind to me."

"The wife of the Secretary of the Navy?"

"Yes, she has a son in the navy and a daughter here. No fear, Lettice, but that we can go with them, and take Mr. Clinton as our escort."

Lettice shrugged her shoulders, but made no comment, though when it was known that they were to go to the ball, she was in a twitter of excitement, and declared she meant to captivate the highest dignitary there, if she could.

"That will not be difficult," Mr. Clinton murmured, for her ear alone. The girl turned, and gave him a little scornful look. Despite the young man's efforts at being polite and attentive, he had not met with much encouragement, and never was allowed an opportunity for one of those confidential talks he had found so pleasant during the summer.

Into a gay and brilliantly lighted room in Tomlinson's hotel, on the night of December 8, 1812, Rhoda and Lettice entered. The former looked very fair and elegant in her India muslin, her delicate features and fair skin set off by a scarf of pale blue. Lettice, with her brilliant color, her dancing curls, and pretty figure, looked not less fair in her gown of pink, with

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her floating scarf of white, skilfully embroidered. They had scarcely come into the ball-room, the walls of which were decorated with the captured flags of the *Alert* and the *Guerrière*, when there was heard a great cheering and noise of excitement. "What is it?" whispered Lettice, half in alarm.

"Nothing to be terrified at, you may be sure," returned Mr. Clinton, "for every one is smiling and eager. See, Mrs. Madison is talking quite gayly."

Lettice stood on tiptoe the better to see, as into the room trooped a crowd of young gentlemen all escorting a young man who bore aloft a flag.

"'Tis young Mr. Hamilton," cried Rhoda. "See, Captain Hull and Captain Stewart receive the flag. They are taking it to Mrs. Madison. It must be a captured flag."

Lettice watched while, amid resounding cheers, the flag was placed by the side of those taken from the *Alert* and the *Guerrière*. "It is a fine sight," she exclaimed. "I am so glad I came!"

She was so full of enthusiasm that she did not notice that she spoke to a stranger, but the young man addressed smiled down at her and replied: "So am I. Have you heard what it is all about?"

"No, please tell me."

"It is the flag of the *Macedonian*. She was cap-

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tured on October 25, by Captain Decatur of the frigate *United States*, and Mr. Hamilton has just brought official notice of it to his father."

"Oh, thank you." Lettice's lovely eyes were shining with delight. "I am so glad."

"Lettice," came Rhoda's voice severely. Then Lettice realized that she did not know this young man, and blushing, she followed Rhoda's lead. The young man stood looking after them. "I wonder who the dear little girl is," he said to himself. "I must find out."

"Who was that, Lettice?" Rhoda asked.

"I don't know. Oh, Rhoda, I was so excited that I spoke to him without realizing that he was a stranger. I am afraid it was a dreadful thing to do. Don't tell Aunt Martha nor Mrs. Hamilton."

"No, I will not; but you must not do such things. I shall have to keep a strict eye upon you."

"I am afraid you will," replied Lettice, meekly. However, after the supper, when the manager of the ball proposed as a toast, "Decatur and the officers and the crew of the frigate *United States*," and after the most exciting evening she had ever known, as Lettice was about to leave the ball-room,

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she turned for one last, parting look, and from across the room came a smile of recognition from the strange young gentleman, and though Lettice was following Rhoda most decorously, she could not resist an answering smile as she turned away.

CHAPTER VII.

Captured.

BY this time the ports and harbors of the Chesapeake were declared in a state of blockade, and after her visit in Washington was over, Lettice returned to Baltimore to hear that little fleets of British ships were appearing off the coast.

"You are much safer here than at home," Mrs. Tom Hopkins said; "for if the British should come up the bay, there is no knowing what will happen. Think how they have burned and plundered lower Virginia. We may yet see our homes in the country burned over our heads."

"Do you really think so, Aunt Martha?" Lettice asked apprehensively.

"One cannot tell," Mrs. Hopkins returned, shaking her head. "Alas, this foolish war! It has taken my husband from me and may rob me of my home."

"Why don't you go to Boston when Mr. Kendall and Rhoda go?" Lettice asked demurely.

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"Because my duty is here," her aunt replied, a little sharply. "I shall not neglect that for the sake of my own comfort and convenience. I was not brought up that way."

"Isn't it a pity that all the Massachusetts people don't feel so?" Lettice said slyly.

"Why, child, what do you mean?"

"I mean that they don't want the war to go on because it interferes with their comfort and convenience, and yet it is their duty to stand by their country's rights."

"You don't know what you are talking about," replied her aunt. "A chit of a girl like you doesn't know anything about politics."

"I've been to Washington, and I heard, oh, so much talk about it there! I know all about war matters," Lettice returned triumphantly. "You ought to have heard Mr. Clay and Mr. Calhoun! And even Mr. Randolph, I believe, would think we ought to defend ourselves if the enemy invades the country."

Mrs. Hopkins went back to her first grievance. "And they will invade it. Nothing but discouraging news from your uncle, and no news at all from Joseph. We are not strong enough to resist this invading foe."

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"But just look at the victories at sea!"

"A few, to be sure; but as soon as the British are roused to a sense of the real situation, our little navy will be wiped out. I am told that they have said they will chastise us into submission."

"They will, will they? I'd just like to see them!" Lettice's eyes flamed, and she stamped her foot in rage.

"Why, Lettice, what a temper you display!" said Mrs. Hopkins, viewing Lettice's angry tears with disapproval. "You never see Rhoda fairly cry with temper."

Lettice's remembrance of Rhoda's reserved manner and her quiet self-control served to calm her. "I don't care," she said. "I know she boils inside, whether she shows it or not." Then she sat very still for a time. A picture of Rhoda's tranquil face with its small features, her smooth light hair, her neat slim figure, rose before her. She wondered if at that moment she and Robert Clinton were walking the streets of old Georgetown. From this her thoughts wandered to the old graveyard, and she jumped up with a suddenness that startled her aunt. "Do you suppose, Aunt Martha," she said, "that Brother Tom wasn't drowned after all?"

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Mrs. Hopkins put down her work and looked at her niece in surprise. "What in the world gave you that notion, Lettice?"

"I don't know. Often when I've been down in the graveyard at home I've thought of it."

"His body was never recovered, it is true," Mrs. Hopkins returned thoughtfully. "It is possible, but not probable, and I'd put any such notion out of my head, if I were you. He was not only a trial to your parents, but he was not a benefit to society."

"No, he wasn't, and yet, at his best, he was a dear fellow. No one was so thoughtful of mother, and no one ever loved me so much as Brother Tom. Nothing was too much trouble for him to do for others, and if he had let those wild fellows alone, he would have been all right." Lettice's eyes were full of tears again, but this time they were not tears of anger.

Her aunt viewed her with a puzzled smile. "How you do fly from one thing to another, child. One minute you are in a rage, and the next you are melted to tears of sorrow. Come, give that fantasy no more thought. Run down and tell Mrs. Flynn that she must not let that barrel of oysters go to waste, even if we have

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them three times a day. We have such a little family now that it is hard to dispose of things, but with prices so high, there is need of economy." She sighed as she spoke, and Lettice, who had been planning an excuse to get back to the country, felt conscience-smitten, and would not suggest such a thing, now that she realized how utterly alone her aunt would be.

It was very dull for her in the quiet house, and Mrs. Hopkins would not allow her to have even Lutie. She endured Danny, to be sure, because his master had a fondness for the little fellow, and, moreover, he made himself useful in many ways. But Lettice spent a tedious winter, and though she tried to be patient, and did enjoy a few frolics, she was glad to see the first signs of spring.

All through the winter had come cheering reports of naval victories of more or less importance. Many prizes had been brought in by the Baltimore privateers and letters-of-marque, for this city took the lead in sending out such vessels. From the port of New York came the news that Joseph had been successful in capturing more than one English vessel, and had taken them into the Northern ports. Thirteen merchant vessels

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were captured off the coast of Spain by one Baltimore ship alone, and this record was equalled by more than one gallant cruiser. Not a day passed but news arrived of some valiant sea-fight. In February Bainbridge took the *Java*. In March the *Hornet* worsted the *Peacock*, and the names of Hull and Decatur, Bainbridge and Jones, were on every one's lips. Throughout all this naval warfare Baltimore was foremost in energetically showing fight, and against the state of Maryland, in consequence, the strongest enmity of the foe seemed to be directed.

It was in April that Rhoda and her father announced that they would return to Baltimore, and then Lettice saw that her desire to go home could be granted, and she wrote to her brother James to come for her. James, nothing loath, responded at once, so that he arrived in time to welcome Rhoda. Under her father's watchful eye Rhoda was not very demonstrative in her greetings, and Mr. Clinton, following close in her wake, was not received with much enthusiasm by Lettice—a fact he was not slow to notice and to comment upon.

"I am coming down to Sylvia's Ramble again," he whispered to Lettice.

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"When Rhoda comes, I suppose," Lettice returned in chilling tones.

"Don't be jealous," Mr. Clinton begged.

Lettice turned upon him with scornful eyes. "Jealous! I jealous? You are vastly mistaken, sir!" and not another word did she vouchsafe him the remainder of the day.

The next morning early she and James started down the bay on one of the packets running from Baltimore to Queenstown. It did not seem possible to those whose plantations lay along the inland creeks that the enemy could have any object in penetrating into their part of the country; yet at that very time the British were ravaging the southern shores of the Chesapeake, plundering plantations, and carrying off not only slaves and household valuables, but even robbing women and children of their clothing. In spite of their straits but little protection was given them by the government—this partly because it was not able—and the unfortunate inhabitants had to protect themselves as best they could.

On the morning that Lettice and her brother departed there were lively preparations going on in the city of Baltimore. Lookout boats were established far down the river; troops were sta-

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tioned along the shores, for the news had come that the enemy was approaching, and that Baltimore was to be the object of attack.

Mrs. Hopkins and the newly arrived visitors absolutely refused to venture down the bay. "We will escape in another direction, if need be," they said.

"You mean you will stay to welcome your friends, the British," Lettice said saucily. "That's not what I will do. If we are to meet them, let it be in our own home."

"Pray, Miss Lettice," Mr. Clinton said, "remain with us. We will have the means to protect you and your brother — a means which may be lacking when you pass beyond our influence."

Lettice shot him a withering glance. "Your protection, indeed! I'd rather die than be indebted to your complaisance for my safety!" And those ever ready and passionate tears began to gather in her eyes.

Rhoda made a slight movement toward her, but her father laid his hand on her arm and she passed, pressing her lips tightly together. Lettice gave a toss of her head, and said, "Come, Brother James, it is time we were off; the packet will be starting without us."

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"I most devoutly wish it would!" Mr. Clinton exclaimed.

"Well, it won't!" Lettice retorted, moving toward the door. "Come, James, cut short your adieux. Good-by, all of you. I leave you to the tender mercies of Admiral Cockburn." And without a turn of her head she hastened down the street.

James followed and overtook her at the corner. "You are a spoiled little minx, Letty," he said. "Why do you speak so disrespectfully to your elders?"

"Do you perchance mean Robert Clinton? Am I to have such an inordinate amount of consideration for him because of his advantage of a few years?"

"Oh, Robert Clinton, was it? But you included Mr. Kendall and Aunt Martha in your remarks."

"Well, if I did, I am glad; I'd not have had the temerity to attack them but that I was so hot against that weathercock."

"Weathercock, is it? Humph!" James was silent a moment, and then he added, "Weathercocks seem to be a product of New England."

"Are they then male and female?" Lettice asked mischievously. Then seeing her brother's face looked really grave and troubled, she linked her arm in his and said coaxingly: "Never mind, Jamie, there

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are as good fish in the sea as ever yet were caught, and one doesn't need to go so far from home for them. Let's whistle these weather-vanes off, and let them whirl to the tune their north wind blows. Is that the *Patapsco*? I'm glad to be aboard her once more. There seems to be a fair number of passengers in spite of the alarms. We will have a right merry time, I reckon. There is Becky Lowe, as I live! and Tyler Baldwin, and — Come, Jamie, help me up." And in a few minutes a jolly little party was established in one corner of the boat, Lettice and her brother being welcomed heartily.

"I'm scared to death!" Becky cried. "Jamie, I was so relieved to see you come aboard; it guarantees one more protector if we are attacked by the British. You will fight for me, won't you?" And she turned a coquettish glance upon him, moving a little aside that he might take a seat next her.

Lettice, leaning over the rail, watched the water as the boat moved out of her dock and started down the Basin, moving slowly between the shores now showing their first suggestion of spring.

"Are you scared, Miss Lettice?" asked Tyler Baldwin by her side.

"No, are you?" she asked, without raising her eyes.

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"Yes, for you."

Lettice looked up, startled. "What do you mean?"

"I mean that I wish to heaven that all the ladies were safe inland, miles from the coast. I've no confidence in our being safe, although the captain says so."

"What would they do to us if they were to take us?" asked Lettice, looking sober.

"They'd not treat you ill, I hope, but they might scare you to death. Miss Lettice, I have not seen you since your visit to Washington. Did you enjoy the naval ball?"

"You are changing the subject. Do I look pale with fright?"

"No, you do not; but it is not a pleasant thing to anticipate, and I should not have spoken of it. Why harrow ourselves with what may not happen at all?"

"Why, indeed. Yes, I was at the ball. How did you know?"

"I didn't know, positively; I promised to find out. I judged from the description given me by one who saw you that it might be you whom my cousin, Ellicott Baldwin, met."

"Is he a naval officer? A young man? Yes,

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I see, it is you of whom he reminded me. Did he tell you— Oh, Tyler, I hope he didn't think me a forward piece. I spoke to him in a moment of excitement, not realizing that he was a stranger. How came he to mention it?"

"He was most desirous of discovering who you were. He could not learn your name, and the best he could do was to find out the names of your companions. When he told me who they were, and described you, I was able to tell him that I was almost certain that the lady of his fancy was none other than Miss Lettice Hopkins, of Queen Anne's County. Do not trouble yourself over having met him in so chance a way; he has only admiration for you, and spoke of you in a most respectful manner. He told me of your meeting, and some day— Heavens! what is that?"

They both started up, for the boat was now opposite North Point, and they saw bearing down upon them several small vessels belonging to the enemy's squadron which lay just within the mouth of the river. Soon followed a scene of confusion. Becky Lowe fell fainting into James's arms. Lettice, with pale face and imploring eyes, clung close to Tyler Baldwin. "What will

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they do?" she whispered. "Shall you have to fight?"

"It would do little good, and so I think the captain will conclude. In such a case discretion is the better part of valor. The captain, for the sake of all concerned, will probably submit with the best grace he can summon. We are not prepared for a battle." And the event proved the truth of his words.

"We are prisoners," said Tyler, after returning to her from a tour of investigation. "All we have to do is to make the best of it. They are preparing to put us under guard, and are helping themselves to whatever they can find."

Becky had recovered sufficiently to sit sobbing by James's side. He was trying to comfort her, and looked pleadingly at his sister, that she might understand that her assistance would be appreciated.

"Come, Becky," said Lettice, in quiet tones, "there is no use fussing over the matter. We may be thankful that we are not hurt, and that there is not going to be any fighting. I think we should submit with dignity, and show them what stuff American girls are made of." But

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Becky was not to be comforted at once and continued weeping hysterically.

"Law, Becky," Lettice said, at last out of patience, "you fairly provoke me. What is the use of your snivelling and sniffing? There is nothing to be gained by it, and you only draw attention to yourself; that is what you want, I shall believe, if you don't stop. Look at Sally Weeks, she is as still as a mouse." Nevertheless, in spite of any effort to make light of the situation, it was a hard ordeal for them all; for instead of reaching their homes that evening, as they had expected, they were all night under guard, and the next morning saw a wan and weary company.

"How much longer shall we be kept here?" Lettice asked her brother, wistfully. But the answer came with the order to remove the prisoners to an old boat. "You are allowed a permit from the admiral to proceed to Queenstown," they were told, and they did not dare to resent the impertinence of the message.

It was a long and uncomfortable trip which was before them; for with scarcely any food, and with no water at all, after their night of detention, and upon a miserable hulk of a boat, which made but slow progress, it was as forlorn a company as one

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might wish to see, which at last landed at Queens-town in Chester River. But the effect of this was that not one of the party but felt that when the moment came, he or she would do the utmost to work revenge.

CHAPTER VIII.

First Blood.

“COCKBURN is coming!” This was the news that was borne from lip to lip, and Lettice was made to repeat her experience over and over. It must be said that she did rather needlessly enlarge upon the terrors of the occasion when Lutie was the listener, and the eyes of that sable maiden grew bigger and bigger as Lettice described Admiral Cockburn’s appearance: a great big man, as tall as a locust tree, with fiery red hair and blazing eyes and a long beard that blew out like the tail of a comet; so he appeared to Lutie’s vision, her imagination adding hoofs and horns; and he became the theme of Jubal’s perorations, taking the place of “Poly Bonypart” as a bugaboo to scare the children and the more timid girls. And not without reason; for a terrifying account of a raid upon Havre-de-Grâce and other towns in the upper Chesapeake was cause enough for alarm.

It was Birket Dean who came galloping over with

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news : " Cockburn, with a big force of men, has been playing havoc up in Kent and Cecil counties, and even beyond. Havre-de-Grâce has suffered ; every one has been plundered, and the ravagers weren't satisfied with that, but went up the Sassafras and destroyed Fredericktown and Georgetown. They say that the women pleaded and begged that he would spare their homes, but he refused, and the houses were burned to the ground ; and he says he'll not be satisfied till he has burned every building in Baltimore."

" Oh, does he mean to go there next ? " Lettice asked in excitement.

" They say he doubtless did intend to, but he has heard through his friends among the Peace men that the lookout boats are stationed all the way down the Patapsco, and that there are videttes along the shores of the bay and the river, and besides, the City Brigade will be ready for them. They fired alarm guns in Baltimore and had all the troops out, but the redcoats passed by Annapolis and Baltimore and went to the upper bay. A great many people moved out of the city, I am told."

" Do you suppose there can really be any danger of their coming here ? " Betty asked, holding her baby very closely.

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The men looked at each other and were silent, then William, caressing the top of his little son's silky head, said, "If they do, we'll defend our homes to the last drop of blood."

"And you'll not leave us, William?" said Betty, scanning his face eagerly.

"My place is near home, I have determined," he replied, smiling down at her.

The next few days brought tales of further marauding; tales of such horror that Betty and Lettice clung to each other in terror. And, indeed, the atrocities committed were such that in some places the word "Hampton" was used instead of "Attention" to call the men to order, and the accounts of the terrible ravages lessened greatly the number of those who opposed the war.

But as days went by and no Cockburn appeared, the fears even of those most easily frightened were quelled, and affairs went on as usual.

"It's desperately tiresome, this staying at home," Lettice said to her brother James. "I don't mean to do it any longer. Would there be any harm, do you think, in our going out for a wee bit of a way on the water? We know full well that the British are away down the bay, and I haven't had a sail this many a day. Do take

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me out, Jamie, or I'll go alone." It was a lovely morning in July, somewhat warm, and promising greater heat. Lettice sat discontentedly on the lower step of the porch, looking off toward the creek.

"You'll not go alone," said James, swinging his long legs over the railing of the porch, and sitting down beside her.

"Then you'll take me."

"Yes; there's not a sail in sight, and I reckon we'll have it all to ourselves, besides —"

"Besides what?"

"I think I'd like to be at Queenstown when the boat comes in."

Lettice turned and looked at him. "Why? You have a reason. I see it in your eyes."

"So I have." He took a letter from his pocket and held it off at a little distance. Lettice made a grab for it, but he caught her hand, and laughing, held her firmly. "It isn't for you," he said.

"Whose is it, then?"

"Mine."

"Let me see the handwriting. Please do, Jamie."

He held the letter at a careful distance, and she read the address in Rhoda's neat hand: Mr.

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James Hopkins. "From Rhoda! Oh, is she coming down on the packet?"

"Yes, so the letter says, and will I meet her and Aunt Martha. It seems that Aunt Martha has been ill, and the city is hot, so she thinks she may venture down to this neighborhood; unwisely, I think, with the enemy so near and ready to pounce on us at any moment."

"Now, James, quit talking so to scare me. And where is Rhoda's devoted cavalier, that she must call on you for an escort?"

"I do not know where he is; her father has gone to Philadelphia, and probably the young man is there too; they seem to travel in company."

"I wonder if they went on the new steamboat. I should think they would go that way; such a novelty as it is."

"Perhaps they did; Rhoda does not say."

"Well come, then; if we are to meet the packet, we ought to be off. I hope there will be news from father. It seems a long time between letters, and so very long since we have seen him. I think I will take Lutie along with me, and we can stay all night at Sylvia's Ramble. I'll run in while you get the boat ready and tell Sister Betty that we are going."

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"Don't go, Letty," Betty advised. "Suppose you should encounter the British."

"We'll not, I am sure; they are away off down the bay, and we'll not go far."

"Well, I wish you wouldn't go at all. James ought to have more sense than to take you."

"He had to, because I told him I'd go alone if he didn't."

"Sauce-box! you'd do no such thing."

"Wouldn't I?"

"Lettice, you wouldn't. Don't you ever dare to do such a thing. Remember Hampton."

Lettice looked suddenly grave. "I reckon I'd better not go alone," she said, as she turned away.

"It is such a lovely afternoon for a sail," she remarked, as she settled herself in the boat. "You don't expect to shoot any game, do you, Jamie? What's the gun for?"

"For defence, if need be, and this pistol, too." He laid it down by the side of the gun.

Lutie put both hands to her ears. "Law, Mars Jeems, yuh ain't gwine in de way o' dem Britishers, is yuh?" she asked in terror.

"I'm not going to get in their way if I can help it, but they may get in ours. I think, after all, Lettice, you and Lutie had best go back."

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"Not I!" Lettice returned. "I'm here, and here I'll stay, Britisher or no Britisher. I don't mean to have you go alone; besides, Aunt Martha is not well, and I ought to go over as soon as I can, she might need me."

"Rhoda said they might need me, not you."

"How self-satisfied some one is all of a sudden! I say they may need me. Now, push off; there's no use parleying. I'll jump in and swim there if you don't hurry."

"I believe you are capable of it," Jamie returned.

"Of course I am. I am sure the packet would not be running if there were any danger, and you told me, yourself, that none of the enemy had been seen around here."

"I know I did; I would bear you back to the house by force if I thought there would be any danger for you. At all events, we'll trust to luck, and get over to the landing as quickly as possible."

"We've plenty of time, haven't we?"

"Yes."

"Then do let us stop at Betty's cove. Mrs. Cooke promised me a plant, and I've long wanted a chance to get it."

James consented, and before long they were turning into a little creek which lay back of Mr. Cooke's

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property. The boat, however, hardly touched her moorings before a shout was heard, and two men started up from behind some bushes, crying : " Halt there ! We've got you, have we, you foul deserter ! "

James, who had scarce set foot on shore, turned and dealt the man about to grab him a heavy blow ; but before he could regain his footing upon the boat, the second man gave a shout, and a couple of others came running from a small boathouse near by. The first seized James and dragged him off, despite his manful resistance.

For a moment Lettice was nearly paralyzed with fright, then she recovered her wits, and, grabbing the gun, she pointed it at James's assailant. The gun was heavy, and her hands trembled with the weight of it. Suppose she should shoot wildly and kill her brother. With a swift, silent prayer that James might be spared, she took aim, fired, and dropped the gun. " Hand me the pistol," she cried to Lutie. " Run, Jamie, now's your chance ! " she shouted, for one of the men holding James, being wounded in the shoulder by the shot Lettice had fired, had dropped his prisoner's arm ; and James, with a wrench, tore himself from the remaining hold upon him.

He had too often shared in the athletic sports



“Come on,” she yelled.

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common upon holidays not to be a good runner, and he was but an instant in reaching the edge of the water; dashing in, he swam around to the other side of the vessel, which was slowly drifting farther and farther out, Lettice meanwhile standing resolutely pointing her pistol at his pursuers. "Lutie," she cried, without turning her head, "pick up that axe, and if any one dares to touch this boat, brain him. You hear me?"

Lutie, though quaking with fear, gained courage from the attitude of her young mistress and picked up the axe. "Come on," she yelled. "Come on, yuh po' white trash, yuh! Jes' lemme ketch one o' yuh techin' mah young mistis, an' I'll lay dis axe 'bout yo neck lak yuh was a chicken fo' brilin'. Yuh ole good-fo'-nothin' tu'key buzza'ds, yuh!" She stood with axe raised, and the two defenders of the little vessel did present such a formidable aspect that the men fell back. Only one or two were prepared to fire. They had been disturbed in the taking of an afternoon nap, and had previously divested themselves of all superfluous accoutrements. Therefore, though one or two bullets whizzed across the bows of the vessel as she retreated, not one touched the occupants.

Slowly, farther and farther out the little craft

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floated, and finally James, who had scrambled aboard, was setting sail for the opposite shore, and told Lettice they were beyond danger. "I feel like a cowardly wretch," he said, "to run from the foe at the very moment you needed me for defence. What would 'have happened to us all, but for my brave little sister?"

And then Lettice sank down and began to cry hysterically, thus demanding Lutie's administrations; and for some time the maid found herself fully occupied in soothing her young mistis. "Law, Miss Letty, yuh is safe," she repeated. "Huccome yuh cry when 'taint nobody daid?"

"I want to go home, I want to go home! Jamie, take me home!" Lettice wailed.

"I will, sis. We are getting there as fast as we can. Don't you see we have turned about and are going back?"

"And you won't go to meet the packet? Say you won't."

"Never mind about that now. If I do go, it will be on horseback, and I will go around by the road; so you needn't worry about that."

"I don't want you to go," Lettice persisted. "I don't want you out of my sight."

James laughed. "You're funny, sis. I can't

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help laughing at you. A minute ago you were so fierce and valiant, and now you're weeping and going on like a baby."

"But you're all wet," sobbed Lettice.

"Suppose I am? That's nothing; and on a hot afternoon, too. I have often been as wet as this when I've been out ducking, and when it was a good bit colder. Come, sit up here and help me. We shall have to tack across, for the wind has died down."

"You are sure you are not hurt at all?" said Lettice, drying her eyes.

"No, not a bit. I look rather the worse for wear, that is all."

"It was so awful to see them dragging you off," and Lettice burst into tears again.

"They didn't drag me very far, did they? Thanks to my little soldier girl of a sister. There, honey, don't cry any more; we're nearly home." And he hugged and petted her till, by the time they reached their own landing, she had somewhat calmed down. But as James led her up the steps to her sister Betty, she lapsed again into a woful state, and it required the combined efforts of Mammy, Dorcas, Lutie, and Betty to quiet her; for one minute she would burst into wild laughter

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as she looked at Lutie, and would say, "She looked so funny standing there threatening to chop off their heads like chickens," and then she would fall to weeping because it was so awful to see them dragging off her brother. At last, under the combined effects of red lavender, salts, and finally a mint-julep, she fell asleep. "I don't trust you off this place again without me," said Betty, bending over the exhausted little figure and kissing the white forehead around which damp curls clustered. And with Mammy to fan her on one side, and Lutie on the other, she was left in the quiet of her own room.

James hurried off his wet clothes, donned another suit, and springing upon his horse, galloped across country to the landing, arriving just in time to see the packet come in, and to welcome his aunt and Rhoda. A flush mounted to his face when he saw in attendance Mr. Robert Clinton. "I don't see what they needed me for," he muttered.

"Mr. Clinton surprised us by arriving from Philadelphia last night," Rhoda told him. "My father was not willing that I should come down here, he sent word."

"But you came. Why?"

"Because it is my duty to remain with my aunt,

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and I cannot let my personal convenience stand in the way of duty," replied Rhoda, a little primly.

"And Mr. Clinton came because it was his duty, or because you did, which?" said James, in a vexed tone.

"My father would have it so. When he learned that I intended to remain with Aunt Martha, he said that he should prefer that we have the protection of either Mr. Clinton or himself, and since his affairs did not permit of his presence here just now, he sent Mr. Clinton."

"I see." James looked at her fixedly, and she looked down, blushing faintly.

"Where is Lettice?" she asked, to turn the subject. James told her of their late experience.

Rhoda shivered. "Is it as bad as that?" she asked.

"Yes, and may be worse. I wish you had not come down."

Rhoda bit her lip. "Aunt Martha insisted," she murmured.

"Unwisely, I think. I should advise that you return at once."

Rhoda shook her head. "I will stay as long as Aunt Martha does. She will need me."

"But you will persuade her that there is danger?"

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“I will try.”

But Aunt Martha, once she took a decision, was not to be moved, and she refused utterly to return to the city, saying that her husband's interests demanded her presence on the plantation, and she felt it her duty to remain at all hazards. “The place will go to rack and ruin while he is away, if I don't look out for it,” she declared, “and I cannot neglect my husband's affairs when he is away. I am willing to take the risks, for I think my presence may be a saving means for us all, in case of a visit from those bands of foragers.”

And therefore Lettice heard with mixed feelings that her uncle's home was likely to hold for some time, not only her aunt and Rhoda, but Robert Clinton.

CHAPTER IX.

Love and Politics.

THE presence of the enemy in the neighborhood convinced every one of the necessity of taking every precaution to protect themselves and their property. At first alarm many persons had hidden their plate and other valuables, and many had sent their families farther inland. But beyond the discomforts occasioned by raids, when houses were sacked and often burned to the ground, and when slaves were enticed away, the people of Maryland did not suffer as much as did those of lower Virginia. Where there was no marked resistance, and where there was no reason to suppose the heads of families were in the American army, allowance was made for property taken, and pay given. Therefore Aunt Martha had reason on her side when she said, "I shall simply let them take what they want and shall expect pay for it."

"That is not what we will do," Lettice said. "We are not going to pretend that we are friends, but of

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course it is different with you, Aunt Martha." Lettice had recovered from her fright and was really enjoying life. If James lost no opportunity in visiting Sylvia's Ramble, neither did Robert Clinton fail to make a daily appearance at Hopkins's Point, till Lettice came to look for his coming as part of her day's pleasure. He was truly a very attractive young man, every one conceded.

"I haven't a word against him," said Lettice's brother William, "except for his politics. You'll not go over to the enemy, will you, sis?" he said, pinching her cheek.

"Never!" returned Lettice, steadily. Nevertheless, the telltale blush upon her cheek was not caused by the pink sunbonnet she wore. The little maid of seventeen found it hard to remember her politics when she was listening to the beguiling words of the young New Yorker, who by this time had declared himself her devoted suitor.

"Why do you deny me, sweet Lettice?" he said. "Must I leave you altogether? Am I so hateful to you?" This was but the night before, when the two were coming home from a frolic at Becky Lowe's.

"There is Rhoda, you know," Lettice had answered in a low tone.

"Rhoda, yes; but —" he looked down as he gath-

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ered Lettice's hand in his — "but you see, I don't love Rhoda, nor does she love me."

"How do you know?" Lettice asked, wondering if it were right to allow her hand to lie so long in his clasp.

"I know that Rhoda feels toward me as I do toward her. We are excellent friends. I admire and respect her greatly, and to no one would I be more ready to give my confidence, for she is discretion itself; but I know full well who it is that has captured my heart, and besides, did you see your brother James and Rhoda as we passed them just now? I do not think they were thinking of either of us."

"No, I did not notice them, I wasn't looking; besides, Rhoda doesn't love James's politics any more than I do yours."

"Politics? What have sweet lasses like you to do with politics? Let the men settle the affairs of the nation, and let the maidens rule in the court of love, where they are more at home."

Then Lettice sighed and did not draw her hand away. The witching moonlight, the summer night, the low pleading tones of her lover—all these cast a glamour over her, and so swayed her that it seemed that the present alone were the only thing to consider, and Robert walked across the fields

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to Sylvia's Ramble, feeling that his wooing would soon come to a happy ending.

And yet, the next morning Lettice said never would she go over to the enemy. "I told Brother William I never would. I have promised him," she said to herself, as she ran swiftly along the path to the old graveyard. Lutie started up from where she was sitting before one of the cabins in the quarter, but Lettice waved her back. "I don't want you, Lutie," she said. "You can go back."

"Whar yuh gwine, Miss Letty?"

"Never mind where I am going. I don't need you, and I don't want you to follow me. Stay where you are."

"Miss Letty gwine whar she gwine. She got no use fo' nobody dis mawnin'," Lutie remarked to the old woman before whose cabin she sat.

Lettice made a detour and came around by the rear of the old graveyard. The thicket was closer here, and hid her from the view of any one passing. She threw herself down in the long grass, hiding her face in her arm. "I said that, and I am afraid I am growing to love him," she murmured. "I have made one promise to my brother, and how can I make another to him?" She lay still

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a long time, and once in a while a tear trickled down her cheek.

Presently she sat up. A sudden thought had struck her. Suppose she could win her lover over to her side of thinking. That would be a triumph indeed! Why shouldn't she? Did he love her, he certainly would not give her up; yet as she pondered upon the subject, she felt that she was by no means certain of the success of her effort, and her face grew grave again.

From over the hedge came a voice, calling softly, "Lettice! Sweet Lettice, where have you hidden yourself?"

She sprang to her feet and stood where she could be seen. Robert pressed aside the detaining vines and came up to her. "Lettice, sweetheart, I could not stay away. Do you forgive me for coming so early? Was it a dream? a beautiful dream which I had last night, or did I see a light in your dear eyes? I love you so, sweet Lettice, that I could not sleep last night for thinking of you." He gently pushed back the sunbonnet she had drawn over her face. "Sweetheart, you have been weeping," he said in a troubled tone. "Your sweet eyes are wet. What is wrong?"

Lettice gave a little sob, and for one moment

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yielded to the clasp of his arm, burying her hot face on his breast. She felt a sudden joy to be thus near him, to hear him speak, but only for an instant she allowed herself to remain thus, and then she sprang away, and stood a little beyond him. "Tell me," she said, "do you love me enough to join the cause of my father and my brothers?"

He looked at her gloomily, and then, leaning on the tall headstone which her movement had placed between them, he said slowly: "Do you make that an issue between us? You love me less than you love the platform upon which rests the opinion of certain members of your family?"

She looked troubled in her turn. There was a long pause. An utter stillness prevailed. Once in a while a bird darted from the faintly rustling leaves. The distant sound of water plashing against the side of the bay shores, or the murmur of voices from the fields struck their ears. Lettice noted these things unconsciously, and with them the faint odors of the growing greenness about her, and the shapes of the shadows on the grass. She drew a long breath. "You do not love me, if you are willing to lose me because I love my country."

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"It is my country, too. There is not a difference in our love for our native land, but in our belief in what is good for her. I believe that the war is unrighteous and will be the country's ruin. I am hostile to nothing except the war. I am for peace at any cost. You pin your faith on your father's beliefs, that is all; and it cannot, it shall not, separate us." He made a step toward her, but she drew back.

"No, no," she cried. "While my father is fighting on the Canada border, so far away, perhaps at this moment lying wounded, or dead," she whispered, "can I promise myself to one who is willing to encourage his foes to work his destruction? No, I cannot, I cannot!"

The young man turned aside and leaned heavily against a gnarled old tree which overshadowed them, and again there was silence. When Robert spoke, it was very quietly. "That I would encourage a foe of yours is a thought too terrible to contemplate; that I could ever do aught to bring you one moment's pang seems to me impossible. The war cannot last. I do not give you up, I but wait till the war is over, and then—Lettice!" He held out his hands yearningly, but she did not move. "Promise me, dearest, promise me, that

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when the question is settled, that you will no longer deny me my place, and meantime keep me in your heart."

"Provided you do us no wrong, provided you do nothing to bring trouble upon us, after the war—I will—consider it."

"Even that ray of hope is much. I make this concession, and you, dearest, can never know what it costs: I promise to take no active part in the measures against the carrying on of the war. I have been an earnest partisan, I acknowledge; yet I will henceforth be a neutral. God forgive me, if I am wrong; if to win your favor is more to me than the approval of my countrymen. Can you not give me a proof of a like measure of love?"

"If when the war is over, you come to me with hands unstained, and with a conscience clean of having done no injury to our side, I think I may, perhaps, be ready to promise you—what you ask." She hung her head, and the last words were in a whisper.

"And you will seal the bond, beloved, you will?" He advanced and would have kissed her, but she retreated, crying:—

"No, no, the war is not over yet." She spoke gayly, however, and held out her hand, which he

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pressed to his lips. But just then Lutie's voice broke in upon them.

"Miss Letty, Miss Betty say huccome yuh fo'git yuh-alls is gwine to yo Aunt Marthy's to dinner? She say yuh bleeched ter come an' git dressed e'ssen dey leave yuh 'thout nothin' but cold pone." Lutie's giggle followed the message, and Lettice, with Robert at her side, took her way to the house.

"Law, Letty," cried Betty, meeting her in the hall, "you certainly are feather-brained these days. Here I am all ready, and you are mooning about, nobody knows where. It is high time we were off. This is to be a state dinner, remember, and Aunt Martha will never forgive us if we are late."

"I didn't know what time it was," said Lettice, as she ran upstairs.

Aunt Martha's state dinners were rather dreary affairs. Solemn dinings to which dignified heads of families were invited. In this instance it was in honor of an elderly bride that the invitations were sent out. One of Mr. Hopkins's cousins had taken to himself a second wife, and Lettice did not anticipate any great joviality; yet her hopes were high, for she had gained a great point, she considered. Robert would be true to his promise,

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she knew he would; and if the war would but end, then he would make his request of her father in proper form, and her father would not refuse. She was entirely unworldly in her thought of it all, and hardly gave a passing consideration to the fact that her lover was a wealthy man, and considered an excellent match; all that troubled her was his politics. She stopped so often, and was so pre-occupied in the making of her toilet, that Lutie finally exclaimed:—

“Yuh sholy mus’ be in lub, Miss Letty. Yuh ain’t gwine put on bofe dem scarfs, is yuh?”

Then Lettice laughed and told Lutie she was a saucy minx, that if she didn’t behave she should be sent out with the field hands. And Lutie, who knew just what that threat amounted to, having frequently heard it before, giggled and further remarked that: “Mars Clinton a mighty fine gemman,” and when Miss Letty went to New York to live, Lutie hoped she wasn’t “gwine be lef’ behin’,” for which speech she received a rap of Lettice’s knuckles, and then mistress and maid descended the stairs, the latter as proud of her young lady, in her best summer attire, as the young lady was of herself.

It may have been that Lettice was not willing

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to risk sitting by Betty's side under the ardent gaze of her lover on the opposite seat of the carriage, and with Betty to watch every glance of his eye, for at the last moment she declared that she wanted Jamie to drive her over, and would wait for him, and wouldn't the others please go on without her.

"You are a contrary little piece," said Betty, out of patience. "Here you have kept us waiting all this time, and now you won't go with us. Why didn't you say so in the first place?"

"I didn't think of it," returned Lettice, calmly. "You flustered me so by telling me it was late, that I forgot about Jamie." And seeing she was bound to have her own way, Betty and Mr. Clinton drove off without her.

The company had all assembled when the last guests from Hopkins's Point reached Sylvia's Ramble, and Lettice wished she had come earlier when she saw that Mr. Clinton was at the gate to meet her, and that with him in attendance she would be obliged to pass under the scrutiny of a dozen mature cousins, each of whom felt it a prerogative to make as many personal remarks as he or she desired; so that the girl was glad to escape with Rhoda, who, though critical, was not

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so aggressively candid as one's relative are likely to be.

The guests, although knowing that Mrs. Tom Hopkins was a Boston woman, supposed her frankly siding with her husband, and therefore they did not scruple to discuss at the dinner-table politics from their point of view. News of the Remonstrance Act of Massachusetts had just been received, and those favoring the war policy were hot against the Bay State, and did not hesitate to voice their feelings.

"With our brave Lawrence not cold in his grave," said Mr. Jacob Seth, "the Massachusetts people adopt a resolution that it is not becoming a moral and religious people to express any approbation of military or naval exploits not immediately connected with the defence of their sea-coast and their soil."

"And it was in Boston harbor that the fight between the *Chesapeake* and the *Shannon* took place," said another guest.

Rhoda bit her lip and glanced quickly at James, who regarded her with an amused look, while Lettice's eyes sought Robert. His face was flushed, and he was looking steadfastly into his plate.

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"Massachusetts believes the war to be caused by ambition and desire for conquest," put in Aunt Martha, stiffly.

"I beg your pardon, Cousin Martha," said Mr. Seth, "we forget that you are not a Marylander. Cousin Tom has taken such a decided stand, that we do not realize that perhaps you may be less enthusiastic. The women of our land whose husbands have gone to the war could scarcely be expected to approve it."

"It is not a cheerful subject, anyhow," the bride remarked.

"And I am sure the occasion warrants a livelier one," returned Mr. Seth, gallantly. And they fell to chaffing each other, and in the end, Lettice declared a more pleasant dinner she had never enjoyed at Aunt Martha's.

"I am surprised that Robert did not immediately take up the cudgels; he is not wont to be so circumspect," said Rhoda, musingly, as she and Lettice were walking in the garden.

"Isn't he?" returned Lettice. "Perhaps we are converting him to our way of thinking."

"That would scarcely be possible," Rhoda replied. "He is pledged to support his cause, and is too ardent an adherent to give in easily. My father

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says he is a strong aid to him, and he depends much upon him in various important matters, although Robert is so much the younger."

"I suppose that is true," said Lettice, thoughtfully. "I do not wonder, then, that he is anxious that you should be fond of each other. How about it, Rhoda?" she asked teasingly.

Rhoda showed no special emotion except by the nervous closing of her hand. "When the war is over," she replied, "these vexing, political problems will not interfere with our decisions in other directions, as now they must do."

"That is very true, Rhoda," Lettice answered softly. "Let us suppose the war over, and each of us free to act as she would? Is there then no reason why you should not favor Mr. Clinton? What says your heart?"

Rhoda looked her squarely in the eyes. "I admire Robert. I have known him since I was a little child. He is entirely worthy any woman's regard." Then suddenly. "And you? What does your heart say?"

Lettice looked confused; then she replied, laughing, "I'll tell you when the war is over."

Rhoda regarded her gravely. "Robert Clinton will never desert his party," she said; "and I

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think he will spare no means to forward the interests of those whose opinions he endorses."

"Perhaps," Lettice returned lightly; "but men are not infallible. The best of them are mistaken sometimes, and he may yet change. Rhoda, would or could any one in the world make you differ from your father in politics?"

Red grew Rhoda's cheeks. "I don't know," she returned faintly.

CHAPTER X.

Suspicious.

SO far, with the exception of the raid into the upper Chesapeake, the eastern shore of Maryland had not suffered greatly from the enemy's depredations, but during the spring and summer of 1813, St. Mary's County, on the western shore, was seldom safe from marauders, who plundered and burned and destroyed till the people were reduced to extreme poverty. The men compelled to perform constant military duty received no help from the government, and in consequence of the deplorable condition of affairs, many took their families and emigrated to the far West. During the summer over one thousand volunteers and recruits were sent from Maryland to the Canada border, sadly as their help was needed at home.

Many of the people of the Eastern shore, with the enemy terrorizing them, likewise abandoned their homes; for Kent Island, a point lying directly

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opposite the city of Annapolis, was taken possession of by the enemy early in August, and when three thousand British troops landed, it was to find but a small remnant of the population left. From this point foraging expeditions were constantly sent out, keeping the inhabitants of the neighboring shores in a constant state of uneasiness. On August 8, three ships of the line, five frigates, three brigs, two schooners, and some smaller vessels, advanced toward Baltimore, but the prompt appearance of those who were determined to defend the city, and the visible preparations which had been made, were sufficient to ward off any attack, and the enemy moved off and threatened Annapolis which lay across the bay from their station on Kent Island. Here likewise there was no lack of preparation, and the British finally withdrew.

All this set astir those in the neighborhood of Lettice's home. Many fled, and those who had not already buried their valuables, or had not placed them in some safe hiding, made haste to do so. Lettice and Betty had long since seen to it that the family treasures were safely hidden; but since no one knew where the next attack might be made, they declared that as far as their per-

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sonal safety went, they might as well be in one place as another.

It was on the morning of August 7, that William came hurriedly in, saying: "The British are making for our shores! I must hurry off, Betty. Don't look so terrified, my love. I trust we shall not suffer from the attack, but the militia are ordered out, and James and I must go. Here, Lettice, take these papers and put them in safe hiding somewhere; they are valuable. I ought to see to it myself, but I shall not have time. If anything happens, get over to Uncle Tom's as quickly as possible. I fancy Aunt Martha can hold her own, and there is strength in numbers." And kissing his weeping wife and trembling sister, he mounted his horse and was off, accompanied by James, who made his adieux with a last whisper to Lettice, "If I fall, Lettice, give this little packet to Rhoda."

Lettice nodded, too full of distress to speak, and the two women, holding each other closely, watched the young men as they galloped out of sight. "Oh, Lettice, Lettice," Betty sobbed, "suppose we never see them again!"

"Don't!" cried Lettice, sharply. "Betty, don't say such things. Let us busy ourselves about some-

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thing, or we shall not be fit to face trouble when it comes. I must hide these papers at once." She concealed them under her apron, and stole through the orchard to the graveyard, where, dropping on her knees, she hastily dug a hole close by the leaning footstone of Theophilus Hopkins's grave, and in the cavity she placed the box of papers. From time to time she glanced apprehensively around to be sure that no one observed her, and she was startled in the very act of covering up the place of hiding, by hearing some one say: "I knew I should find you here. Are you honoring your ancestor by planting fresh flowers upon his grave? It is rather late in the season, isn't it?"

Lettice, looking greatly confused, stammered: "I — yes — no, I was not. It is rather late for some flowers, to be sure, but some can be planted at almost any time, you know." As she recovered herself, she spoke with more assurance. "How long have you been watching me, Mr. Clinton?" she asked.

"Only a few moments. I saw you digging away for dear life, but I didn't disturb you, for I liked to watch your little white hands." He tried to take them in his, but Lettice drew them away.

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"They are all covered with earth and stuff," she said. "You came very early."

"Yes, I came from your aunt with a message. We have heard that the British are moving in this direction, and Mrs. Hopkins thinks you will all be safer under her roof. I suppose your brothers are off at first alarm."

"Yes, they have gone; but I am not sure what Betty will consent to do. The negroes, to be sure, are scattering off toward the woods, and our being here will scarcely keep them together. The older and more faithful ones will stay anyhow, and we could take Lutie, and Mammy, and Speery with us. Jubal has been stirring them all up with his fearsome tales, and I shouldn't be surprised if he coaxed off a lot of the field hands. I never did trust Jubal," she said meditatively.

"Then I will escort you over, if your sister consents."

Lettice agreed, and they started for the house. "Do you know if it is simply a foraging party of British on the way here, or is it really a large force?" Lettice asked.

"I believe it is quite a large force; at least I was told so by some one who brought the news. A company of scouts under Captain Massey made

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the discovery that the British were advancing, and there has been a skirmish. Major Nicholson and his troops are at Queenstown, which I believe is expected to be the point of attack."

"Has it come to that? Then we may look for anything. I am sure Brother William would want to have us go to Uncle Tom's."

They found Betty quite willing to follow Mr. Clinton's advice; therefore, taking the baby and three of the servants, they hastened over to Sylvia's Ramble, to find Mrs. Hopkins somewhat nervous, but outwardly determined, while Rhoda was quietly alert, and not the least discomposed, to all appearances.

Lettice, eager and anxious, was at times so pre-occupied that she scarcely heeded what Robert said to her. Once she turned on him fiercely. "If we are raided upon here, shall you fight for or against us?" she asked. "Let us know what to expect."

"Lettice!" he exclaimed. "How can you ask such a question? I will defend you to the last drop of blood, but I hope there will arise no such emergency."

Lettice gave him a lovely smile. "I almost wish there would," she said.

"Why such a wish?"

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"Because you would then have an opportunity of proving yourself a true American."

He bit his lip and made no reply for a moment ; then he said, "I think there is no one, whatever his views, who would not be ready to defend those he loves, should they be in danger, but I think we have no cause for alarm ; non-combatants will be shown every courtesy, I am sure."

"By whom ? That pirate, that thief, that marauder, Cockburn ?"

"Sh !" exclaimed Mrs. Tom Hopkins, hearing the words. "Even walls have ears. We must be discreet, Lettice."

"Discreet !" began Lettice, passionately, but the distant sound of great guns came upon their ears, and the words died upon her lips.

It was a day of dread and great gloom which no effort could dispel. They sat waiting, they knew not for what, till at last Rhoda cried : "Here comes a messenger riding hard. Go out, Robert, and see if he brings news."

Not only Robert, but all of them, hastened to meet the newcomer, Betty and Lettice fairly outstripping the others. It was young Birket Dean. He looked tired and travel-worn, but he cried triumphantly : "All safe, Mrs. Hopkins ! Our men had

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to beat a retreat, but not before they had made the enemy taste of their shot. We didn't lose a man, but there were several killed and wounded on the other side, and more than one deserted. Every one thinks that St. Michael's is threatened, and Talbot County is up in arms. I must ride on and tell them at home of what has happened. I promised William I would stop by and tell you all how matters stood. He says you'd better stay here for the present, for he took it for granted I would find you all here together." And he galloped off, leaving them all with a great weight removed.

The next news that came was that the little town of St. Michael's was in danger of an attack. It was the place where nearly all the famous "Baltimore Clippers" were built, and because of this it attracted the attention of Cockburn, who intended destroying the shipyards and the vessels then in course of construction. But he met so valiant a resistance that he finally withdrew, and although the houses in the little town showed the effects of the shot, which flew like hail, not one of the militia was hurt.

The next day Lettice and Betty returned to their own home.

"You'd better not be too hasty in getting back," warned Aunt Martha.

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"I believe Aunt Martha is disappointed in not having had a visit from Admiral Cockburn," said Lettice, laughing.

"Indeed, then, I am not!" returned the lady with some asperity; "but I've an older head than yours, miss, and I think I may consider that I have more discretion."

"Maybe," Lettice nodded; then said saucily, "If you should receive a call, send us word, and we'll come over and help you entertain your Britishers."

"And you'd do it well," said Mr. Clinton in a low tone.

Lettice gave a toss of the head and sprang into her saddle. For some reason she was not pleased with this young gentleman this morning; he had been far too cautious in showing her attentions, and had been too evidently anxious that no one should discern any difference in his manner toward the two girls; and besides, Lettice resented his saying that it would be as well that they should not take Rhoda into their confidence, and yet she had several times come upon the two in close conference, and once had overheard Rhoda say, "I will see that the matter is kept a secret, but we must be very cautious." So Lettice, with a feeling that she could not quite trust him, and that he might be playing a double

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part, was most cool toward him, and eagerly seconded her sister Betty's proposition to go.

It was a few days later that William and James returned. They came galloping in one evening full of accounts of their skirmishes.

"It's a great life," said Jamie; "but I mean to join Barney. We don't get enough service here on shore, and on sea they are always popping at each other."

"Then I needn't return you the packet you gave into my keeping," Lettice said.

James smiled. "No, keep it safe, and if I want it when the war is over, I will ask you for it, and if I fall, bestow it as I directed you."

"Lettice," her brother William's voice broke in, "where are those papers? Are they safely hidden?"

"Yes, I hid them with my own hands," she replied.

"I shall want them soon."

"To-night?"

"Hardly, I think. I will let you know if I require them; but they must be sent off the first opportunity, for there are government secrets among them."

"Oh, really? I am glad they are out of my hands,

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then. Who is coming? I hear the clatter of horses on the walk."

William arose and went down the steps, and Lettice heard him say: "Ah, General, welcome, right welcome. Good evening, Tyler. Glad to meet you, Mr. Baldwin. Come in, gentlemen, and let me present you to the ladies." And Lettice was soon in the presence of the veteran, General Benson, Captain Dodson, her old friend, Tyler Baldwin, and, whom but the young naval officer, Ellicott Baldwin, of whom Tyler had spoken to her, and whom she well remembered.

"A fortunate circumstance it was which led me to my cousin's this week," said the young man, who bowed low before Lettice. "I trust you remember me, for I have never forgotten you."

Lettice blushed and dropped her eyes. "I was very bold," she murmured; "but I was so excited that I forgot I was speaking to a stranger."

"Not bold," the young man hastened to say. "It was but the charming naturalness of a child; the spontaneity of trusting youth. You cannot think I had feelings other than those of admiration for your ingenuous words, and I have ever since desired an opportunity of meeting you again. May I tell you how I happen to be here? Shall we sit here?" He

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led her to a corner of the wide piazza, and seated himself by her side. "The general and Captain Dodson were coming this way to get some papers which I am to deliver at Washington, to which place I am to start by daybreak. They have been having a lively time at St. Michael's, as you probably know."

"Yes, we have heard of it; but those papers — they must be the ones my brother was just speaking about, and I shall have to go and get them at once, for it is I who know where they are hidden. I will have to ask James to go with me."

"Are they within doors?"

"No, they are down yonder." She made a movement of the hand in the direction of the graveyard.

"May I not accompany you? Your brother seems occupied at this moment."

"I do not object, if you are willing to help with the digging."

"Will I not be? Try me. I shall like the fun, I assure you."

"Then we will go at once. I will get a spade as we go along. Are you afraid of haunts?"

"Not I. And it is moonlight and not midnight, so I fancy we are safe from evil charms."

"Perhaps you have a rabbit foot."

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"No ; nor any charm, except such as is possessed by my companion, whose youth and beauty should be sufficient to protect me from all malign influences." They sauntered down the moonlit garden path. Sweet clove pinks and August lilies freighted the air with their heavy perfume. Lettice remembered that night, not so long ago, when she and Robert had felt the spell of the moonlight, and when she had almost — She drew a sigh which her companion noted. "Does anything trouble you ?" he asked gently.

"No ; it was only that I suddenly remembered something. See, here by this footstone is the place. The soil is light, and the box is not very deeply placed. I think we can soon reach it." She knelt down on the grass and began to brush away some of the loose leaves and sticks.

Mr. Baldwin struck his spade into the dry soil, throwing out the earth deftly and easily. He had been digging for some minutes when Lettice exclaimed : "Surely, that should be far enough. Haven't you struck the box yet ?"

"No ; I seem to come upon nothing harder than the earth."

She peered over into the hole, resting one hand upon the footstone. Then she exclaimed in an agi-

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tated tone, "That is much deeper than I dug, and nothing is there!"

"Are you quite sure this is the exact spot?"

"Yes, very sure — exactly on a line with the footstone, and a little to the right. Oh, no, I could not possibly be mistaken, for there is not room on the other side, you see. There is some mystery here." She took the spade and began to feel around with it. "It is gone!" she exclaimed. "Some one has stolen it away. I am as sure as of my existence that it has been stolen away."

"I will dig a little further, and more to the right; you may have gone deeper than you thought." He threw out a few more spadefuls of earth, but discovered nothing. "There is no box here," he said at last. "Who could have taken it?"

Lettice was silent a moment; then she said in a tense way, "I think I know. The deceitful wretch! The cowardly spy! I will denounce him before the world."

At this very moment a shadow fell upon the white footstone. Lettice turned quickly — Robert Clinton stood before them. "There he is!" she cried. "That is he, the spy! No one else saw me, and I do not know how long he may have been watching me."

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"What do you mean?" cried Robert. "Lettice, what do you mean? Of what do you accuse me? A spy? I? Is it possible—"

"It is possible that I have learned the value of fair words alone," she returned scornfully. "I understand many things now. I understand your confidences with those who, like you, would be willing to play into the hands of our country's enemies. Yes, I believe you are a spy."

The young man turned to Mr. Baldwin, who, leaning upon his spade, regarded the two. "Sir," said Robert, "will you tell me if this young lady is suddenly crazed? Can you explain this to me?"

"Oh, you are very innocent!" Lettice broke in. "Add deceit to deceit. Tell him, Mr. Baldwin, since he is so innocent of the charge. Refresh his memory."

"Miss Hopkins secreted some valuables in this place," Mr. Baldwin said, turning to Robert. "We came down here to unearth them, and we find them gone."

"And you charge me with taking them! Lettice, you can do that? Great Heaven! what do I hear? Lettice, you are but joking. You do not really mean it. This is but one of your tricks."

"I wish to Heaven it were so, sir. For my part,

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if you have taken the box to plague me, it is a sorry joke ; but return the papers quickly, I beg of you, and I will forgive you. Have you them? This is no time for play ; say quickly."

"I have not," he answered slowly. He was very pale, and was trembling from head to foot.

"You may not have them, but did you take them?" Mr. Baldwin asked.

Robert whirled around upon him. "You dare ask me that! And who are you, who take the right to question me? I am not answerable to you, sir, but you shall be answerable to me." And, taking a step forward, he gave the other a slap in the face.

From Lettice came a cry of dismay, and Mr. Baldwin, with eyes flashing, said in a low, even voice: "I will meet you, sir, when and where you please, as soon as this charge made by Miss Hopkins is disproved. At present I do not forget that we are in the presence of a lady."

"Lettice, Lettice, forgive me!" cried Robert. But she gave him not so much as a look or a word. She extended her hand to Mr. Baldwin. "Take me to my brother," she said. "I must tell him at once of his loss."

Mr. Baldwin hesitated, and Lettice understood that he would fain secure the man she had accused.

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"No, no," she whispered, "do not arrest him. I may have been too hasty. We have no proof as yet. I beg of you, Mr. Baldwin, take no further steps till we consult my brother. He — he may be innocent, and — and — we have been friends." Therefore, leaving Robert standing wretched and alone, they moved toward the house.

CHAPTER XI.

An Interrupted Duel.

PALE and agitated, Lettice stood before the company now gathered indoors. "It is gone!" she whispered. "Gone!"

"What do you mean?" asked her brother. "What is gone?"

"The box with the papers. I hid it by the foot-stone where Theophilus Hopkins is buried, and just now, when Mr. Baldwin and I went to get it, we found nothing there. Some one has taken it."

"Have you any idea of who could have done it?"

Lettice twisted her fingers nervously, and gave a quick distressed look toward Ellicott Baldwin, but she made no answer.

"Have you any idea of who could have taken the box?" General Benson asked. "Speak up, my child. Remember that you are a loyal little girl, and that it is for the good of your country that we discover these papers. Beyond that, your brother's honor is involved, and you will place him in a most

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embarrassing position if the papers fail to appear. Did any one see you secrete these papers?"

"Yes." Lettice spoke so low that she could scarcely be heard. Mr. Baldwin watched her silently, but with an expression of deep sympathy.

"Will you tell us whom you suspect?" said her brother, gently. "My little sister is so tender-hearted, gentlemen, that she is loath to divulge the name of the culprit, if indeed she knows it. Suppose we talk it over by ourselves, little sister, if these gentlemen will excuse us." And putting his arm around her, he led her from the room.

When they were alone she put her head down on his shoulder and wept silently. "I don't want to tell, brother," she said, when she had become more composed. "I was very angry at first, but I don't want to get any one into trouble, and of course I have no proof; I only suspect. But one person saw me as I was covering up the box, and — Oh, if I could only get the papers back, would I need to tell?"

Her brother considered the question. "Perhaps not. It would depend upon the person. If a dangerous enemy were working us harm, you would want him to be put where he could do us no injury, wouldn't you?"

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"If that could be managed? If he should leave the country?" said Lettice, eagerly.

"I cannot promise what leniency would be shown; but if you can recover the papers and will tell whom you suspect, I will do my best to see that nothing shall be done without full proof of treachery."

"Then if I can get the papers, and I promise to tell you why they were taken, will that do?"

"So far as you are concerned, yes, I think it will. Wait here and I will confer with the general."

But her brother had no sooner left the room than Lettice flew out by the back way, ran to the stable, flung the saddle on her horse, and was off like a shot. She would take no risks. Down the road she galloped, and dashed up before the porch where Rhoda was sitting alone.

"Lettice!" cried Rhoda, coming hastily forward, "what are you doing here? Is there no one with you? Have you brought bad news?"

Lettice slipped down from her horse, twisted the bridle through the ring of the hitching-post, and ran up the steps. "Are you alone, I ask in turn?"

"Yes. What is it? You are so agitated. Has anything happened to — anybody?"

Lettice did not heed the eagerness of the question nor the sudden pause before the last word,

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"I am alone, yes. And something has happened. No, no one is hurt, but some valuable papers have been stolen. Do you know anything about it?"

"I? What should I know?" Rhoda drew herself up, and held her head high.

"I overheard you talking one day to Mr. Robert Clinton, and you said things which made me suspect that you might try to help the enemy, if you had a chance. And— Oh, Rhoda, never mind if I do seem to accuse you! it is to save Mr. Clinton. If you have any love for him or for me, tell me truly, do you know anything about the papers?"

"I know nothing of any papers in which you could possibly be concerned," she replied coldly. "Tell me your story more clearly."

Lettice tried to do so, ending with, "If you have not been concerned in the matter, he must have done it entirely of his own accord."

"Do you suppose that either of us would so degrade ourselves as to stoop to theft?" returned Rhoda, frigidly.

"I don't know; I can't tell. I am so distracted that I hardly know what I do think. I know you are not friendly to our cause, and that in war it is not thought wrong to avail one's self of all sorts of methods to carry out an intention. Oh, Rhoda!

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if I do not recover the papers, they will make me tell whom I suspect, and he will be arrested and perhaps shot for a spy."

"Sh! sh! Aunt Martha may hear."

"Where is she?"

"Gone to bed with a sick headache. It was warm, and I did not care to go so early."

"What shall I do? What shall I do?"

"Do you care so much for Robert Clinton's safety?"

"I care! Of course I do. I don't know whether much or little. One would rather one's friends should be safe. I denounced him to his face for a spy, and if it is true that he is one, I despise him, but I do not want him taken and hung. Oh, Rhoda, will you warn him? And, oh, those papers! What can I do? I don't know which way to turn."

"Robert will tell me the truth," said Rhoda, after a moment's thought; "I am sure he will."

"And will you try to get the papers back again?"

"Yes; but I am quite convinced that he did not take them."

"Who, then? No one else saw me."

"How do you know?"

"I know that he did see me."

"But you cannot swear that another was not

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peeping, so I think you should give him the benefit of the doubt."

"I cannot help my suspicions, knowing his devotion to his party."

"Yes, but he is not a traitor to his country, and does not love her enemies any more than you do."

"And I have given my word that I would tell the name of the one I suspect. Please, Rhoda, get him away if you can, but do not tell him that I begged it of you. Promise me that."

"I will do my best. It is a great pity that you were not more cautious. Are you going back to-night? Must you?"

"Yes, I must. I am not afraid."

"No one knew of your coming?"

"No, I sneaked out, and shall probably be well scolded for it. And what excuse can I make?"

"You are all well?"

"Yes. You have not seen Jamie yet, I suppose."

"No."

"He has just come from down the country, and to-night had to remain at home to help entertain this array of soldiers I left there. You will see him to-morrow, no doubt."

"You volunteer the information as if you thought I had demanded it."

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"Well, don't you demand it? There, Rhoda, I will not tease you. You have been very sweet and forbearing, and I thank you, and will thank you still more if you can help to get this dreadful matter righted."

"One thing you have forgotten."

"And what is that?"

"Your companion, Mr. Baldwin. You say you denounced Robert before him. What is to prevent him from telling the whole thing?"

"True. I didn't think of that; yet I don't think he will until I give him leave. But so much the more need of a speedy warning. When Robert — Mr. Clinton comes in, you will see to it that he is on his guard. They may come after him at any moment."

"I will wait till he comes in. He should be here by now."

"And I must get off at once. I would not encounter him for the world. Kiss me, Rhoda. I never loved you half so well. You are a dear good girl. I wish I were half so wise and discreet."

Rhoda smiled, and gave her the asked-for kiss; then Lettice again mounted her horse and turned down the level road.

She had not travelled very far before she heard

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the hoofs of horses coming rapidly toward her. Suddenly there was a pause in the advancing sound, and she drew in her horse. In the moonlight she could see the forms of two horsemen ahead of her. She watched them for a few moments as they carried on an excited conversation. Presently each led his horse to one side and tied him to the fence; then they stood apart in the middle of the road. Again there seemed to be a heated discussion. Lettice wondered what it was all about. She longed, yet feared, to draw nearer; but at last her curiosity overcame her fear, and she too led her horse to the shadow of a tree, tied him, and crept along by the fence till she came within hearing distance. At this point she gave a quick exclamation which nearly betrayed her to the two young men, in whom she recognized Robert Clinton and Ellicott Baldwin. She cowered close to the fence, her heart beating very fast. She dreaded to advance or retreat.

"I am at your service at any time and at any place," Mr. Baldwin was saying. "I will accept any challenge sent in the regular way."

"Now! I insist upon it now. If you refuse, I shall deem you a coward and a braggart," cried Robert.

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"Then," returned the other, hastily, "choose your position."

At that moment Lettice arose to her feet. This was a duel, she comprehended, and perhaps one or the other would be killed. She ran forward and held up her hand. "You should have witnesses," she said. "Here is one." She stood between them, looking from one to the other.

The men were thunderstruck. "You, Miss Hopkins! What are you doing here? I rode out to find you," Mr. Baldwin said, but Robert spoke never a word.

"I beg of you to desist," Lettice went on. "I chanced to be coming this way. I have been to the house of a sick relative and was on my way home. This is our own ground, and I forbid you to make it a place of bloodshed."

"I bow to a lady's decree," Mr. Baldwin said, returning his pistol to its place. "Why did you give us the slip, Miss Hopkins? And what is your desire concerning yonder gentleman? You denounced him in my presence, and yet when the moment came to declare his offence to your brother, you ran away. As for me, my lips are sealed till you give me permission to speak."

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"I do not give you permission to do anything but leave him and let his conscience be his accuser."

"But who is to be responsible for his appearance if we find he is guilty of the act for which you denounced him?"

"I will be. We have been friends," she said softly, as she half turned to where Robert stood with arms folded and eyes cast down. For an instant Lettice's heart melted within her, and she took a step forward, but she retreated again to Mr. Baldwin's side.

"Take me home," she said faintly, "and let this affair be settled there. My horse is but a few steps back."

"I will bring him to you," Mr. Baldwin said, "and yes, I shall be glad to defer this. You understand," he said, turning to Robert, "I am at your service when you will. This address will always find me." He handed out a card with an elaborate bow. He stood evidently thinking deeply. "If you are innocent, sir," he went on to say, "you will not be afraid to answer a few questions should you be required to do so. If you are guilty, you owe your escape from immediate arrest to the good offices of this young lady. Whatever

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may be my own opinion, I owe you no more of an apology than you do me, and in the interest of my country I am bound to say that you are free only through extreme tolerance." And he turned away.

Lettice and Robert stood facing each other. "How could you? How could you?" Lettice murmured. "This dark suspicion has blighted all the memory of our happy hours."

"This dark suspicion, indeed," replied the young man.

"And you will not clear yourself, will not tell me?" she said eagerly. "But give up the papers, and I will screen you and will think of you as gently as I can."

"I have said that I have no papers."

Lettice wrung her hands. "O dear! O dear! if you would but be candid and tell me, I could help you, I could indeed. For the sake of our past friendship, will you not tell me?"

He came to her side. "Lettice," he began; then dropping the hand he had taken, he turned away. "'Twould be no use," he said. "Farewell, the dream is over. Tell your friend that I shall not run away either from arrest or from him." And he sprang on his horse and disappeared into

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the woods, leaving Lettice with her face buried in her hands.

She brushed away her tears as Mr. Baldwin approached, and stood ready to mount her horse again. They were fairly on their way when he spoke. "This is a hard ordeal for a young lady to go through, Miss Hopkins, but I cannot leave the subject just yet. You are very positive that my late adversary, whose name, by the way, I do not know, is the one who took the papers?"

"No, I am not certain. I only think so because he saw me secure them, and because he is violently opposed to the war, and belongs to the Peace party. I know he has been very energetic in working for his side."

"It looks suspicious, certainly."

"Yet it would be a shame to arrest a man, unless we were sure."

"Yes, I think so, too."

"I think he should be given the benefit of the doubt."

"That is dangerous, sometimes."

"Yes; but I would rather let a dozen guilty ones go free than to cause an innocent person to suffer misfortune."

"A very lovely way of thinking, but I fear few

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offenders would come to justice if all agreed with you. However, in this case we shall have to trust to chance. Your gentleman was very eager for a fight, which it would perhaps have been as well to allow him. I do not feel comfortable over that part of it."

"Oh, but I think it would have been terrible! He has been a friend of ours; has been received at our house on the most intimate terms. Suppose he had fallen, or had caused your death; it would have been dreadful! I should never have ceased to reproach myself for having been the cause of it."

"You are right. I should have remembered your part in the matter. But this other affair of—What did you say the gentleman's name is?"

"I didn't say. He is Robert Clinton, a relative of our former Vice-President of the same name. He is from New York, and is a great friend of some connections of ours."

"Well, we must settle this affair of his before we go home. They are waiting for your return. You can imagine your brother is in something of an awkward position; the papers gone, and you gone. It would simplify matters if we could have returned with a prisoner. I fear Mr. Clinton will be beyond our reach by to-morrow."

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"He bade me say to you that he would not run away from either you or the authorities, but if he should, and if at last he is proved innocent, we will both be glad."

"In that case, yes. You do not seem to be so enraged against him as at first."

"No, I was truly angry. I always fly off like that and regret it afterward. I have had time for reflection, and I needed it. I spoke too impulsively. Think what a dreadful dreadful state of affairs I have stirred up by my quick tongue!"

"It was natural that you should speak in the excitement of the moment. Where does this turning take us?"

"Around by the bay."

"Shall we take it?"

"Yes, if you like. It is not quite so near a way."

She had hardly spoken the words before three men sprang out from a fence corner. One snatched Lettice's bridle; two more dragged Mr. Baldwin down from his horse. "I'll take the girl, pretty creature that she is," cried the first, "and you can have the Yankee."

"Save me! Oh, save me! Let me go!" shrieked Lettice. But the captor only laughed, and catching

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her around the waist, he pulled her down beside him, while a terrible tussle went on between the other two men and their prisoner, who fought like a tiger, and finally managed to secure his pistol. A shot rang out on the air, and one man fell. The one by Lettice's side sprang forward. "Poor old Jerry, are you done for?" he cried, as he leaned forward.

Like a flash Lettice sprang up. At her feet lay the man's pistol which he had dropped. The girl picked it up. Providence had come to her rescue. She raised the pistol, but almost immediately her hand dropped to her side. She noted that the man had lifted the head of his former companion to a more comfortable position. To shoot him would be murder, she reflected. She could not, no, she could not. Yet her own life and Mr. Baldwin's lay in the balance. Now her adversary was about to rise. The horror of what might come next rushed over her, and she hesitated no longer, but darted forward, and dealt the man a desperate blow on the head with the butt of the pistol. He dropped heavily by the side of his fallen comrade, and was very still. Had she killed or only stunned him? She shuddered and turned aside.

Meanwhile Mr. Baldwin and his opponent fought for their lives. Lettice's friend had discharged the

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last load from his pistol, and now it was a question of which would prove the best man in a hand-to-hand fight? Lettice watched them breathlessly. The strength of one or the other must at last give out. Suppose it should be her one dependence, this desperate man who was giving his assailant no time for anything but to attend to the matter in hand. Breathlessly Lettice put into execution a plan. If Mr. Baldwin could only hold out long enough, she might save both herself and him. She quickly undid the long silken scarf she wore, tied one end tightly around the wrist of the man she had sent to the ground, and then tied the other end to a little tree under which they had been sitting. It was sufficiently small for her to be able to make her tether quite secure.

The man began to move slightly, and Lettice realized that he was merely stunned by her blow. Another moment and he might recover sufficiently to add to the hopelessness of the situation. In the distance there was a faint splash of oars; it might be that those who approached would reënforce these assailants. Her wits were sharpened by despair. She leaned over and extricated the pistol from the belt of the wounded man, and rushed to a safe distance from her prisoner. If he had a knife it would

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take him but a moment to cut his bonds as soon as he should be aware of them. She must act quickly, for the regular splash of the oars came nearer and more near.

Ellicott Baldwin, still struggling desperately, heard a cry, "Look out!" A shot whizzed through the air, and his adversary loosened his hold, and in a second was felled to the earth. Lettice's pistol had done good service. She had wounded the man in the ankle, for she had purposely fired low. "Here, here," she cried, thrusting the second pistol into Mr. Baldwin's hand, and he, with one dazed look, rushed to where she stood.

CHAPTER XII.

Escape.

LETTICE ran desperately fast to gain her horse, but for a moment it seemed that all were lost, for the sound of oars had ceased, and instead, shouts were heard; an approaching party of men answered their comrades, who, worsted by a girl's stratagem, would stand at nothing. It took but a few minutes for Lettice's captive to free himself, and his first movement was toward the girl. He was in a fury. One sweep of his sword, one shot from his pistol, and their chances were gone.

Ellicott Baldwin, between his set teeth, hissed, "I will kill her and myself, too, before she shall fall into their vile hands." Suddenly, as if to favor them, the moon disappeared behind a dense cloud, and when it struggled forth again, the man and the maid had vanished. Where? It seemed as if the earth had swallowed them up. The horses stood there, but not a sign of their riders.

ESCAPE.

On each side of the road lay level stretches overgrown with weeds and bordered by straggling blackberry bushes. Farther away, where a shallow creek made up into the land, were trees growing to the water's edge.

"Beat the bushes! Search everywhere!" cried Lettice's late captive. "I'll have that girl if she's above ground. The little jade, to play me such a trick!"

But not a sign of the fugitives could be found, and after more than an hour's fruitless search, the men returned to their boats and to their station on Kent Island.

Meantime, Lettice and her companion had made their escape through the girl's knowledge of the country. She had whispered, "Over the fence! Quick!" and herself had led the way by springing into the bramble bushes on one side the road. The thorns played havoc with her light gown, but she tore herself free from them, ran along a few steps, and leaped into a hollow filled with rubbish. Here an old house had stood; now it was burnt to the ground, and among and around its blackened foundations grew tall weeds which completely hid it from view. Lettice led the way, and her companion followed blindly. At the rear

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the ground sloped gradually down to the creek, so that by stooping low, as they made a pathway through mullein, wild carrot, and ragweed, they could not be seen by those nearer the road. Fortunately, their followers did not strike upon the tumble-down house, or it would not have been an easy matter to reach the creek without being seen.

Neither spoke till the silver gleam of the little creek showed in the moonlight, now struggling through the clouds.

"I am almost spent!" gasped Lettice; "but if they have left the boat this side, we are safe. Over yonder in the woods lives an old negro woman. She is considered a real hoodoo by the darkeys, but she is devoted to all our family, for she belonged to my grandfather, who set her free, and gave her this bit of land in those woods of his." She gave the information in detached sentences, as she limped along the shores of the creek.

"You can scarcely walk," said Mr. Baldwin. "You have lamed yourself."

"Have I? I was scarcely conscious of it. I have stepped on many sharp stones, and these thin slippers are not much protection. No, there is no boat," she said, after some searching. "What

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shall we do? We have made a short cut, but those wretches may yet find us, if we keep this side of the creek. Oh, I am afraid they will; I am afraid!" She caught Mr. Baldwin's arm with a sudden fear.

"God forbid that they should find us!"

"You are hurt too. You are wounded, I know, but do you think you could swim to that little island in mid-stream? I would rather drown in making the attempt than have them get me."

"And I would rather you did. I think I can make it, and I can help you."

"Oh, I can swim, if I have the strength. I but need that. Hark!"

There was a sound of voices and of crackling branches among the trees behind them, and, with one accord, they plunged into the stream, and with slow, but sure progress, swimming, floating, or making feeble strokes, managed to reach the opposite shore, and when they drew themselves up on the sands, their pursuers were parted from them by a considerable stream of water.

Lettice dropped almost fainting on the ground, and her companion was hardly less exhausted. It would have been a very trifling feat for either one of them, ordinarily, but the previous strain had

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nearly robbed them of their strength, and they sat there for some moments, scarce able and scarce daring to move.

"We are very wet," said Mr. Baldwin at last.

Lettice gave a feebly hysterical laugh. "I am very conscious of it. It is a warm night, but I confess to feeling cooler than is agreeable. Do you think they will attempt to cross?"

"No; and I am sure they did not discover us. They did not dream of looking in this direction."

"That good, kind moon," said Lettice, raising her face. "She was so good to screen us with her clouds just at the right moment."

"There are times when clouds can be of more use than sunshine, it seems."

"In this case, surely. Now I am thinking that if it should come on to rain, we would be in a sorry plight. We cannot be much wetter than we are, but there would be no chance of getting dry if it should rain. When we are rested, I think we can find the boat we want to take us over to the mainland. The water is quite shallow beyond, and persons often ford the stream to this island, leave their horses here and boat over to the shore we have left. Since we found no boat there, I conclude it is here."

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"That is good news. We are not cast on a desert island then."

"No, as long as we can find the means to leave it. I think the boat would be over in that direction, among the bushes. We shall have to row around the island to the other side. Do you suppose we can do so without fear of being seen?"

"I think our pursuers have given up the hope of finding us, for they seemed to be going back the way they came. I think we are safe, but it will not do to take any needless risk."

"It was a party of Cockburn's men from Kent Island, I suppose. They are raiding around in every direction. At St. Michael's they have not dared to use any lights, except such as they must have, for months, and it is the same everywhere about. We live in constant dread of them." She shuddered and hid her face in her hands, but in a moment she looked up. "Mr. Baldwin," she said, "I have brought you into great danger which I might have spared you if I had consented to do as my brother wished. I must seem disloyal, as well as obstinate and over impulsive."

"None of those things. You have been brave, and true to your compassionate nature. As for me, save that you were in great danger, the experience

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is one that I might meet at any time. I am not seriously hurt; a cut or two; no bones broken. I have come off well. Pray do not distress yourself on my account. My sole concern is for you."

"Shall we try to get across now? It must be very late."

"I think it is, and growing cloudier all the time. Did you say the boat was this way? Sit still. Please do not make any more effort than you need. Those little feet have been too sorely tried already."

The boat was found in its place, and they embarked upon the little creek, by degrees making their way around the island, and then across to the opposite shore.

"I trust it is not far, for your sake," said Mr. Baldwin, seeing how utterly exhausted the girl was.

"No, it is but a little way." Yet every step was torture to the already bruised feet, and tears were running down the girl's cheeks when at last they stopped at the door of old Hagar's little hut.

Mr. Baldwin rapped sharply. "Who dar?" came a startled response.

"It is I, Aunt Hagar; Lettice, Mars Jeems's Lettice."

"Law, chile! Fo' de Lawd!" came the reply, and in an instant there was a withdrawal of bolts



" What yuh doin' hyar dis time o' night ? "

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and bars, and the old woman's head was thrust out.

"What yuh doin' hyar dis time o' night, honey chile?" she asked, peering out into the darkness. "Huccome yuh lookin' up ole Hagar? I specs yuh in lub," she chuckled; but when Lettice and her companion stepped into a cabin and Aunt Hagar had struck a light, she looked at the two in astonishment. "Law, chile," she exclaimed, "yuh look lak ole rag-bag. What got yuh? Mos' bar' footy, an' all yo' clo'es tattered an' to'n; an' who dis?" She peered up into Mr. Baldwin's face. "I knows him. He one o' de Bald'in tribe. Dat a Bald'in nose. I know dat ef I see it in Jericho. What yuh doin' wif mah young miss out in de worl' dis time o' night?" she asked suspiciously.

"We were at Uncle Tom's, and were attacked by a party of Britishers on our way home," Lettice told her.

"Some o' dat mizzible gang from Kent Island, I reckons."

"Yes, we suppose so. Well, we had a desperate time getting away from them. Mr. Baldwin fought—oh, how he fought!"

"And you, Miss Hopkins, how well you did your part."

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"It was life or death, and we at last did escape, but we have lost our horses, and are too footsore and bruised and scared to go farther."

"Ole Hagar fix yuh up. I has 'intment, yuh knows I has; an' I has yarbs; but, fo' de Lawd, I'll cunjur dem Britishers, ef dey is a way to do it, dat I will. Dere now, honey, let me wrop up dem po' litty footies. Hm! Hm! dey is stone bruise, an' dey is scratch, an' dey is strain an' sprain, an' what ain' dey? But dis cyo' 'em. Now lemme see what young marster a-needin'. Hm! Hm! he slash an' slit; swo'd cut on he shoulder. Huccome he fight an' swim an' row, I dunno, wif all dese yer slashes, an' t'ars, an' all dat. Yuh bofe has sholy been froo de mill. I say yuh has." And talking all the time, the old woman managed to make her visitors really comfortable, as she ministered to them with deft, experienced fingers.

"Now, Aunt Hagar," said Mr. Baldwin, when she had put on her last bandage, "I will leave Miss Lettice in your care, and I will go to her home and report that she is safe. They will be very anxious."

"Oh, but you are not fit to go any farther," Lettice protested.

"Oh, yes, I am. You do not know what a charm

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Aunt Hagar has put into these ointments. Your family will be in great distress of mind, and I think it would be best that I should go and reassure them."

"Yes, honey, he better go," said Aunt Hagar, from the corner where she was busying herself with some mysterious mixture. "Mars Bald'in, drink dis, honey, hit give yuh stren'th, an' mek yuh git over de groun' lak a rabbit. Jess follow de paf to de spring, den strike off to de lef', an' whenst yuh come to de hayricks by de right side de road, yuh is jes back o' Mars William's barn. Hit a roun'erbout way, but hit's better dan crossin' de water. I'll look out fo' Miss Letty. Yuh tell 'em Aunt Hagar got her, an' dey satisfy she all right. An' tell 'em," she went to the door and spoke in a whisper, "tell 'em not to raise a cry all roun' de neighborhood dat she out dis-a-way. Dey is folks dat love to talk, an' I don' want de chile's name to be made free wif, an' have 'em say she traipsin roun' de country wif young men all hours of de night. Yuh hyar me?"

"I agree with you, certainly, Aunt Hagar, and I shall do my part in keeping the matter quiet. A young lady's name is too delicate a thing to be bandied about by those who are merely curious.

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I will see you again soon, Aunt Hagar. I haven't thanked you half as I should for your kindness."

Aunt Hagar beamed, and as she reëntered the room and stood over Lettice, where she sat in a low splint-bottomed chair, she said: "He blue blood. I knows dat. Some folkses has money but dey hasn't nothin' e's. He got de name an' de manners of a gent'man." She stroked Lettice's hair with her withered old hand. "Now, honey," she went on, "I gwine give yuh a drink o' sumpin' to put yuh to sleep, an' yuh ain' gwine wake up no mo' twel de sun three hours high; an' I gwine put a name in dis cup so yuh dreams gwine be sweet an' pleasant. Yuh is had a bad 'sperience, an' yuh might have turr'ble dreams ef yuh didn't have no chawm ter stop 'em. Drink dis, honey, hit tas' es sweet an' good, an' won' hu't a kitten. I mek yo' baid up nice an' clean, an' yuh sleep lak a baby."

"But where will you sleep?" Lettice asked.

"I sleep whar I sleep. Yuh reckon I uses dat baid? I sleeps whar I sleeps; in dis cheer, on de flo', anywhar I lak. Yuh don' reckon I sleeps in dat baid dese hot nights? No, ma'am, I sleeps whar I sleeps." And despite Lettice's protests she would have her take possession of the high four-posted bed with its bright patchwork quilt, and its

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fresh white sheets; and in a few minutes the exhausted girl was fast asleep.

She awakened the next morning to hear the patter of rain on the roof, and to see Aunt Hagar crouching over a fire, giving her attention to a fine pone browning in the bake kettle. There was an odor of sizzling bacon, of coffee, and of some herby mess which Lettice could not identify. She sat up in bed, and called, "Aunt Hagar."

The old woman arose with alacrity. "I 'lows hit mos' time fo' yuh to wek up. I has yo' brekfus mos' done, an' yo' clo'es is dry an' ready fo' yuh. Yo' stockings is too raggety fo' yuh to w'ar, an' yo' purty frock ain' nothin' but strips an' strings. Yuh has to w'ar hit though; hit clean. An' 'tain' no matter 'bout de stockin's, yuh ain' gwine put yo' footies to de groun' fo' a week; dat I say."

"But they feel much better; so much. And, oh, Aunt Hagar, you must have been up very early to have washed and ironed all my things."

"I gits up when I ready. I nuvver has no rug'lar time fo' gittin' up an' gwine to baid," she explained; and then she helped Lettice on with her clothes, after bringing her warm water in a tin basin, and attending to her wants. Then she made

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ready the breakfast on a deal table to which Lettice was assisted, after having been made to drink a copious draught of herb tea.

"Mek yuh eat hearty, chile. Mek yuh feel nice, an' keep off de chills, an' mek yuh rosy an' purty. Yuh doan' want dem pale cheeks when Mars Bald'in' aroun'," coaxingly said Aunt Hagar.

Lettice laughed, and, with a wry face, swallowed the draught, and, to her surprise, she found herself ready for a hearty breakfast, which seemed to taste uncommonly good, for Aunt Hagar was a famous cook and nurse, as she was a noted "conjur woman."

The girl had hardly finished her meal when "rap-rap" came at the door, and the latch was lifted to disclose her brother and her sister Betty, with the carriage, pillows, wraps, and all such paraphernalia. Sister Betty fell on Lettice's neck, kissing and compassionating her. "Oh, you dear child, I was afraid you would be in a raging fever this morning. Oh, you poor little thing, what a dreadful, dreadful time you have had! Naughty girl, to run away from your home. Come, William, pick her up and carry her out to the carriage. It is not raining so hard, but her poor little tootsie-wootsies are all bound up, and she

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must be in a sorry plight, in spite of her brave looks."

"Aunt Hager has been so good to me," Lettice told them. "She has made a new girl of me. I am in rags, but they are clean ones, thanks to Aunt Hager. I feel wonderfully peart this morning, after my woful adventures. And how is Mr. Baldwin? I judge he reached you safely."

"Yes, but in rather a sorry plight, for it was raining hard when he arrived, and the extra effort was none too good for him; but we have kept him in bed, and we will cosset him, and he will soon be well, I hope. He has come off worse than you, for he has a high fever, and I was loath to leave him; but Mammy is a good nurse, and I thought she could do better for him than I."

"He is a brave fellow," William put in. "He made little of his part in your affair, and much of yours, but his condition shows that he fought manfully. Ah, little sister, if you had but stayed at home."

"Now, William, you shall not scold," Betty interrupted. "The child has suffered enough, and she did what she thought was right, no doubt."

"I did hope I could get the papers," said Lettice, wistfully, "and I thought the matter would be most easily settled so, and I was afraid that it would be

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too late if I waited till morning, so I went, and it was no use after all."

"Yet, perhaps it was," her brother said gravely, "for the papers have come to light."

Lettice opened her eyes wide. "And how were they found?"

"There is the mystery. Lutie brought them to me with a marvellous tale of their being handed to her to be placed in my hands, and she either pretended or she did not know who brought them. I questioned her, but she stuttered and stammered, and told about some one in a great cloak, and whose face she did not see, and she declared she was so mortal scared that she couldn't have told who it was, anyhow, and a lot of stuff from which we could make neither head nor tail. But the papers are safe, although no one knows but that they have been copied. I would like to get at the bottom of the matter."

"Perhaps I can," replied Lettice, thoughtfully. "At all events, I am glad they have been returned. And now we will go home." So she was bundled into the carriage, and reached home with a thankful heart. But Aunt Hagar's predictions came true, for it was a week before she could put her feet to the ground.

CHAPTER XIII.

Confidences.

THE rôle of patient which was enforced upon both Lettice and Mr. Baldwin was not altogether disagreeable to the pair. A couple of days was all the time that Mr. Baldwin would consent to remain in bed, and by that Lettice, too, was downstairs, looking, it is true, very pale and with blue shadows under her eyes, but quite herself otherwise. The knowledge of her night's doings was kept a profound secret from all but her immediate family, although Aunt Martha and Rhoda were considered sufficiently discreet to be intrusted with an account of her adventures.

It was James who told Rhoda about it, when he went over to make his farewells before going to join Barney's flotilla, for he declared that he was in no mood for land service. "We can't have every Tom, Dick, and Harry discussing Letty's doings," he said. "There are those just waiting for a chance to call her light and unmaidenly, travelling around alone in

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these times ; although we, who know her, can impute it to nothing but pity and bravery. Besides, Cockburn and his men have such a name, that but to mention the fact of her having fallen into their hands, would give rise to exaggerated reports."

Rhoda nodded. "Yes, we who know her and love her would best say nothing about it. Lettice is a brave girl and a tender-hearted one, even if she is a bit too impulsive."

Jamie's eyes beamed at this praise of his dearly loved sister from one who was always chary of her compliments ; and when Rhoda expressed her determination to go at once to see Lettice, he gladly offered to be her escort. "I wish you were well out of here and safe in Boston," he said. "With that terrible beast of a Cockburn infesting our shores, and every man feeling it his duty to be off with the militia, our homes are illy protected. Your father should not allow you to remain here."

Rhoda frowned, and half shut her eyes in a little haughty way that she had. "My father does what he thinks best. I do not dispute his judgment. He does not know, or is not willing to believe, the state of affairs down here."

Jamie made no response although he thought, "Nothing to his credit that it is so."

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Lettice greeted Rhoda warmly. "It is good of you to come over to see this battered-up piece of humanity," she said. "Am I not a decrepit?" She thrust out one bandaged foot as she stood holding to a chair.

"Are you then so lame?" Rhoda asked with concern.

"Yes, I am rather used up by sprains and bruises, but it is nothing serious, after all, and only demands that I keep quiet."

"Tell me about it," Rhoda said abruptly, as she motioned Lettice to her place on the couch. And Lettice gave her a detailed account of her adventures, ending with, "And it was my very prettiest scarf, the silk one with many colored stripes that Uncle Tom brought me from Paris."

"How can you think of such slight things when it was all so serious?" Rhoda asked, in a puzzled tone.

Lettice laughed. "Because I am so shallow, I suppose. I remember being thankful that I had that particular piece of finery, because it was so strong, and not like some of my others made of a lighter and more gauzy material. You see how I could let my thoughts run on dress, even in that desperate hour. I tell you I am only a butterfly."

"But you are not. You weep like a baby over

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the smallest thing, when it is weak and silly to do so, and you prink and coquet and parade your dress, but at heart you are brave and loyal, and have the greatest amount of endurance. I cannot make you out."

"No more can I you. I am a piece of vanity, and when there is anything to be gained by showing a brave front I can do it well enough; at other times I simply let myself go, and if I feel like crying I cry, when there is anybody around to pet me and make much of me, even if it is only Mammy." Then she suddenly became grave. "Did you know that the papers were found? Or rather, they have been returned."

Rhoda started. "You don't mean it!"

"I do."

"Who returned them?"

"My maid, Lutie."

"Was she the thief?"

"No, I think, — I am quite positive, she was not. She says they were given to her to deliver to my brother."

"By whom?"

"She does not tell. By the way, I promised my brother William that I would try to fathom the matter. Rhoda, where is Mr. Clinton?"

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Rhoda did not answer for a moment; then she said: "You still suspect him? Do you mean me to infer that you believe it was he who gave Lutie the papers?"

"I don't know what to think. I would rather fasten my suspicions on some one else, for more reasons than one."

"What reasons?"

"I would rather be sure the papers had not been copied."

"You believe he would do such a thing as that? I do not. I have more faith in him than you, Lettice."

"Yet you do not love him."

"Have I said I do not?"

"No, but I know it. I know one cannot love two men at the same time."

"Lettice, you presume."

"Do I? I don't mean to; but — Ah well, Rhoda, we are but girls, and we are on the lookout for signs that escape others whose thoughts are not on romances."

"And you think you have read signs in me? Am I such a telltale, then?"

"Far from it. You are unusually wary. But Rhoda, do you know that Jamie leaves us to-day?"

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The color mounted slowly to Rhoda's face, tingeing even her ears with red.

Lettice leaned over and said mockingly, as she possessed herself of Rhoda's hand, "A sign, Rhoda! A sign! What does that blush mean?"

Rhoda bit her lip, but did not raise her eyes.

"Our bonny Jamie," sighed Lettice. "Ah me, I hope God will spare him. I hope, O I hope— Oh, Rhoda, what if he should be going, never to return."

"Don't!" cried Rhoda, in a sharp, quick voice. And then she snatched her hand from Lettice and, covering her face, sobbed in a convulsive, tearless way.

"Rhoda, dear Rhoda," cried Lettice. "What a wicked girl I am! I did not mean to be cruel to you. I should have had more consideration for your feelings and have kept my fears to myself." She essayed to rise, but Rhoda motioned her back. "Come here, then, and sit by me that I may know that you forgive me," she begged, and Rhoda came. Lettice caressed and soothed her so that in a few minutes she had regained her composure.

"You asked about Robert," she said. "He has gone to Washington and vows he will never return.

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He left his address, should any one wish to know of his whereabouts."

"I am glad. I think that is best."

Rhoda in her turn began to catechize. "Do you love him, Lettice?"

"No, I can say truthfully that I do not. I was beginning to, I think; but now, I am so racked by doubt and mistrust that I have no room for any other feeling. I do not want to love him. This cloud would ever be rising between us. I would grieve to have harm come to him, and yet —"

"You would denounce him to his enemies?"

"If it would serve my country, yes. I could not tell a lie for him."

"Then you do not love him."

"Could you tell an untruth for one you loved?"

Rhoda reflected. "I would not tell an untruth, but I would believe in him though no one else did, and I would not give up my belief while there was a shadow of a chance that he was innocent. And, in any event, I would be very sure before I declared a person guilty who might be proved innocent."

"That is why I went to you the other night," replied Lettice. "And I did not denounce him

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before any one but Mr. Baldwin, and that was in the heat of my surprise and anger."

"I know that. But we have been over this subject before. He is gone and will not return. Let us talk of something else. Your Mr. Baldwin, where is he?"

"*My* Mr. Baldwin, as you are pleased to call him, is here in the room across the hall. Would you like to call on him?"

"Not I."

"He is a brave young gentleman, and good to look at."

"Ah, that is why you are not sure of your feeling for Robert."

"No, it is not," returned Lettice, quickly. "And that brings us back to the question we were discussing a few minutes ago. Could a girl love two men at once?"

Rhoda did not answer. She arose and said: "I am staying too long. I must go back to Aunt Martha. I promised her I would be back soon. Your brother William has returned to his company?"

"Yes; he was at home but one day and could remain no longer. With the British such near neighbors, the militia must not be caught napping.

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The plantations are suffering for lack of attention, but the men must fight though the crops fail in consequence. Will you send Lutie to me, if you see her on your way down? And do come soon again."

Rhoda promised and took her leave. In a few minutes Lutie appeared. She had not shown her usual devotion to her mistress during the last day or two, and seemed anxious to efface herself, a proceeding strictly the opposite to her usual one.

"You want me, Miss Letty?" she said as she came in.

"Yes, I do. I don't want to be left up here all alone. It seems to me, Lutie, you have a precious lot of work downstairs, for you try to slip out every chance you get."

"Miss Rhoda, she hyar," Lutie began protestingly.

"I know she was here, but she is not now. I never thought you would neglect your own Miss Letty, Lutie; especially when she is half sick, and cannot get around without some one's help. Haven't I always been good to you?"

"Yass, miss, yuh has indeed."

"Then look here; tell me the truth. Now don't look so scared; I am not going to have you whipped.

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You know you never had a whipping in your life, except from your own mammy. I want you to tell me who gave you those papers to give to your Marster William."

Lutie began to sniffle. "'Deed, Miss Letty, I didn't see him. He have a cloak over him, an' he hide his face, an' he a gre't big man."

"With fiery eyes like Napoleon Bonaparte that you're so afraid of? Now look here, is it any one I know?"

"Yass, miss." Lutie spoke in a tremulous voice.

"Was it—now speak the truth—was it—" Lettice looked cautiously around and lowered her voice—"Mr. Clinton?"

Lutie writhed, and twisted, and looked every way but at her mistress.

"Remember, you'll be sorry if you don't tell."

"Miss Letty, what yuh gwine do ef I don't tell?" at last Lutie inquired in desperation.

"What am I going to do? Don't you know that old Aunt Hagar comes here every day to see me? You know she is a conjure woman, she'll do anything I ask her. You'd better look out."

"'Deed an' 'deed, Miss Letty," wailed Lutie, dropping on her knees, and rocking back and forth, "I so skeered."

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"Of the Poly Bonypart man or the ^cunjure woman? Which?"

"Bofe of 'em. An' I skeered o' dat Cockbu'n. Jubal say he mos' wuss'n Poly Bonypart."

"Jubal does?"

"Yass'm. Oh, Miss Letty, don' mek me tell."

"Humph!" Lettice rested her chin in her hand and thoughtfully regarded the girl sobbing at her feet. "Lutie," she said after a pause, "what did Jubal tell you about Cockburn and his men?"

"He say," Lutie replied, weeping copiously, "he say ef I tells, ole Cockbu'n git me an' mek me dance er breakdown on hot coals; an' he t'ar out mah white teef an' give 'em to he men to shoot out o' dey guns lak bullets; and he snatch uvver scrap o' wool off mah haid, fo' to mek gun wads outen; an' he brek uvver bone in mah body, an' de Britishers rattle 'em when dey play dey chunes ter march by." Jubal could display a delightfully vivid imagination when it served his purpose.

"That certainly would be something terrible," Lettice commented gravely. "I don't wonder you are scared; but you know it would be nearly as bad if you wasted away,—hungry, and couldn't

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eat; thirsty, and couldn't drink; and if your teeth were to drop out one by one, and if your eyes were to roll up into your head and never come down again; and if those you love wouldn't love you, and if some one gave Jubal a charm so he'd hate you. You know what a conjure woman can do."

Lutie burst into loud wails. "Oh, Miss Letty! Spare me, Lawd! Spare me! I a po' mizzible sinner. What shall I do? What shall I do? Oh, Miss Letty, don' let Aunt Hagar chawm Jubal, please, miss. I die fo' yuh. I serve yuh han' an' foot."

"There, Lutie, there," said Lettice, feeling that in her application of Jubal's methods she had gone too far, "come here. Sit down there." She put her hand on the girl's shoulder. "You want to marry Jubal, I suppose. I knew he had been philandering about you for some time. Are you really fond of him?"

Lutie's wails subsided into a sniffle. "Yass, miss," she answered meekly.

"Well, then, I promise you that I will not let any harm come to him or you through anything you may tell me, if you tell the truth. And, moreover, I'll get Aunt Hagar to make you a luck-ball, and I will not tell a living soul who it was that

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gave you the papers, as long as there is any danger coming to either of you from it. But if you don't tell me the truth — then —”

Lutie's sobs were again on the increase. “Oh-h, Miss Letty, I sholy is hard pressed. I is skeert one way by ole Cockbu'n an' turrer by de cunjurin'. I mos' mo' skeerter by de cunjurin'.”

“But you won't tell your mistress, who has always been good and kind to you, when you know it would save her a great deal of trouble? You won't tell unless she threatens to punish you? Ah, Lutie, think what I might do to make you tell, if I were a hard mistress.”

“Miss Letty, Miss Letty, 'deed, ma'am, I don't want to do yuh so mean. Yuh won't let Jubal come to no ha'm, will yuh, Miss Letty?”

“No, I promised you, so far as I have any voice in it, I will not. Don't make me repeat it, you disrespectful girl.”

“Miss Letty, I so bothered in mah haid I fer-gits mah manners,” said Lutie, humbly. “I knows a lady lak yuh ain' gwine tell me no story, an' when yuh says nobody know, nobody ain' gwine know. Miss Letty, — hit were Jubal hisse'f.” And again the girl lapsed into violent weeping, and the rocking back and forth continued.

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Lettice was very quiet for a moment. "There, Lutie," she then said, "you needn't cry any more. You are as safe as can be, and so is Jubal. I will not tell on him, but I want you to tell me all you know about it. Did any one give him the papers to give to your Marster William?"

"No, ma'am, Miss Letty, he peepin' froo de bushes when yuh puts de box in de groun', an' he say he think dey is gol' an' silver derein, an' he want git me one o' dem carneely rings, an' he jes think he tek a little an' nobody miss hit, an' ef dey do, dey'll think de Britishers done git hit; den when he open de box an' fin' nothin' but dem papers in hit, he lay out fur to put hit back agin, but he ain' had no chanst lak he meanter do, an' so he give hit ter me, an' say I is ter give hit ter Mars William an' do lak he say, an' I so do; an' he say ef I tells, de Britishers is sho' to come after me, 'cause dey want dem papers."

"How did he know that?"

"He heahs yuh-alls talkin' 'bout hit dat night he waitin' on de gin'ral in de gre't hall. Yass, miss, he say all dat." Lutie was very quiet now, and only her wet eyes showed recent weeping.

"Very good," said Lettice. "Of course Jubal

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ought to be punished. He has caused more mischief than he knows, and he is not half good enough for you, Lutie; although, poor ignorant boy, it was a temptation," she added, half to herself. "Now dry your eyes, Lutie, and go get that pink muslin out of the closet. I am going to give that to you because you told the truth. I'm sorry I haven't a 'carneely' ring, but there is a string of blue beads in that box; you may have those."

Lutie fell on her knees and kissed her mistress's bandaged feet in her ecstasy at this deliverance from despair and this elevation to heights of bliss, and in a minute she was bearing off her treasures, every white tooth gleaming, as she viewed these darling possessions.

"I am bound to make no explanations," said Lettice to herself. "What a complication it is, and how badly I have treated poor Robert. No wonder he was so hurt and angry and indignant. Alas, if I tell any one that he is innocent, I will have to prove it, and that I have promised not to do. I shall have to wait events, I suppose. Brother William is away, and there is no one else who will press inquiries. Yet, am I not bound to clear Robert to Mr. Baldwin, and I can do noth-

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ing else than write to Washington to Robert himself. Dear, dear, what a scrape I am in!"

At this moment Lutie reappeared with the message: "Miss Letty, Miss Betty say is yuh able to come down to supper? Mr. Bald'in, he comin', an' she say she wisht yuo'd mek yose'f ready, is yuh able."

"I am able, but some one will have to help me to hobble. Go tell Miss Betty, and then come back and dress me." She felt a little flutter of excitement at again meeting the companion of her late adventures, and selected her dress with some care. Yet she sighed once or twice. She had been very unjust to Robert, and of course he could never forgive her. Yes, it was as he had said; that dream was over. Nevertheless, she had a little feeling of resentment toward him because he had not assured her of his innocence. "If he had not reproached me, but had told me, I would have believed him," she told herself. She had been too hasty, she admitted, but like many other persons, she did not feel willing to exculpate the supposed offender from all blame and to acknowledge herself in the wrong, and her feeling of resentment in consequence almost overcame her regrets.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Sorrow an' Trouble."

THE two who had lately been companions in misery met each other, at the supper table, for the first time since the evening of their perilous experience. "This is but our third meeting," said Mr. Baldwin, "and how various the circumstances."

"There is a mighty big difference between a ball-room, Aunt Hagar's cabin, and our present surroundings," Lettice returned. "We cannot complain of monotony. How are you, Mr. Baldwin? Mammy tells me your fever ran high, and no wonder; I have felt like a rag, myself."

"Thanks to good nursing I am much better, and shall be able to proceed to Washington to-morrow, I trust."

"You are not well enough," Mrs. Betty protested. "We cannot let you go when you are but half mended."

"Ah, but there is no word but duty to those who

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have promised to serve their country," replied the young man.

"Yes, but one owes a duty to one's self as well as to one's country," Betty returned.

"Every man is needed. With so little success on the frontier, reverses at sea, and this vandal, Cockburn, ready to destroy and pillage along these shores, it is every man's duty to be at his post, if he is able to get there."

"Yes, I suppose so," Betty sighed. "That is what William says. With his father and uncle on the frontier, his brother gone to join Barney, and with the plantations running to waste down here, they all have no word but duty."

"And that is right," Lettice spoke up. "It is to protect their women and their homes that they go."

Mr. Baldwin nodded with a pleased smile. "After all that you have suffered, to hear you say that, Miss Lettice, proves that you are very loyal."

"I am the more so that I have suffered. The worse we are treated the more eager we are for the war to go on."

"That is beginning to be the prevailing spirit. But I wish I could know you safe in Baltimore. I think it is very unsafe for ladies to be left unprotected when the enemy is so near."

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“And such an enemy!” cried Betty. “Then don’t you think you ought to stay and protect us, Mr. Baldwin?”

He laughed. “You make me choose my words, and put me in the position of seeming very ungallant. I must go. I cannot do otherwise.”

“Yes, I agree with you,” Lettice gave her opinion, “and if I were a man I would go too.” And Betty arising from the table, they adjourned to another room, Lettice being carefully assisted by the young man.

“Each moment I remain is dangerous,” he whispered, “for each moment it becomes less my desire to leave.” Lettice blushed, and while Betty went to her baby, they two sat in a corner of the wide hall and had a long talk. They had not many friends in common, but they loved their country, and they had struggled with a common foe; then no wonder they were not long strangers.

“I have never asked you where your home is,” said Lettice, to her companion. “You do not talk like a Southerner, and yet you are Tyler’s cousin. I do not seem to distinguish your native place by your speech.”

“I am from Massachusetts,” he told her, “but I

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am something of a cosmopolitan, as every one who follows the sea must be."

"From Massachusetts? I thought every one in that state was dead set against the war."

"Oh, no, not every one. To be sure, New Englanders, as a rule, are against it; but if you should investigate, you would find many gallant soldiers and sailors hailing from our part of the country."

"Have you always lived there?"

"Always. My father lived there all his life, and my grandfather before him, and I am very proud of my native city. Tyler Baldwin and I are second cousins; his grandfather and mine were brothers, and as I was for some time in Annapolis, near my father's kin, I came to know them quite well."

"I am very glad to find one New Englander so fierce a fighter in this war. It doesn't seem right that when she did so much in the Revolution — not that it was more than we did — but when she did so much then, that she should be so dreadfully indifferent now, when it is just as much a war for freedom. I am afraid that, like our old cat there, New England has grown fat and lazy in prosperity. I think I'll name that cat New England, for she has no special name; Puss seems to be sufficient for her own uses."

Mr. Baldwin laughed, and they chatted on con-

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tentedly till the big clock in the hall warned them of the lateness of the hour, and, beyond that, Mammy had been hovering around for some time, with uneasy glances at her patient.

“I feel as if I had known you for years,” Lettice said, as she bade the young man good night.

“If length of time be counted by the amount of pleasure it brings, I have known you for years,” he returned gallantly.

The next morning he took his leave, and the two women, left alone with the servants, looked forward with dread to what the days might bring them. But before long their hearts were cheered by news from the North ; that news which, in the never-to-be-forgotten words, “We have met the enemy and they are ours,” announced Perry’s victory to a grateful people. Report after report of victories at sea had come, but none that matched in importance that which was won by Perry on Lake Erie. All over the country bells were set ringing, cities were illuminated, toasts were drunk to the young hero, and odes were addressed to him ; and those who before had felt very dubious, now began to place unlimited faith in the success of the American side.

Even Aunt Martha and Rhoda rejoiced openly, for the former still obstinately refused to leave the

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plantation, and the latter felt it her "dooty" to remain likewise. She was a very sweet and gentle Rhoda these days, and Lettice grew more and more fond of her.

Lettice, it may be said, was not long in recovering her usual health and spirits. One of the first visits she made was to Aunt Hagar. She bore her a gift from Mr. Baldwin, and the old woman was greatly puffed up by the possession of a five dollar gold piece. She made mysterious incantations, and consulted tea-cups and cards, and used other means of reading Lettice's fortune. The fair man and the dark man, and the fair woman that came between, and the surprise that was partly agreeable and partly disagreeable, were all there, but the most impressive of all was a prophecy which seemed greatly to disturb the old woman herself.

"Sorrow an' trouble," she said, "to you an' yo' house. Law, honey, law, honey, I is sholy distu'bed to see dat. From across water comes black death, an' here is weepin' an' wailin' an' gnashin' of teef. Dey is meetin' an' partin', an' 'live is daid, an' daid is 'live. Dat is de mos' cur'os fortune I has fo' many a day. I wisht I ain' seen it, I sholy is. I dat hu't in mah min' I can't sleep dis night. What dis? I lak to know who dat. Go long home, honey.

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I so 'stracted I dunno what I sayin'." And after Lettice left, until late in the night, the old woman pored over her pack of cards, shaking her head and muttering, "Sorrow an' trouble."

The next day came a messenger in the person of a small, kinkey-headed darkey. "Mammy Hagar say will Miss Letty come see her. She turr'ble sorry to trouble her, an' she ain' meanin' no disrespec', but she got sumpin' to tell her, an' please, miss, come by yo'-se'f."

Lettice donned her cloak and hat and set off, wondering what was meant by this. It was early afternoon, and the scene was fair and peaceful. One could scarce realize that war ravaged the land. She sauntered along through the woods, stopping every now and then to pick a leaf which had reddened early, or to watch a partridge hurry to cover. At Aunt Hagar's door she knocked. The latch was lifted, and the wrinkled face of the old woman appeared. She whispered mysteriously, "Come in, honey," and shutting the door carefully, she beckoned her visitor to one corner of the room which was screened off by an old quilt. Here, on a rude pallet, lay a man.

Lettice started back. "Who is it?" she cried.

"Dat what I say."

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“Where did he come from?”

“He layin’ out in de holler o’ de ole house what got burnted, an’ I gits him here, an’ he cl’ar outen his haid an’ stupefy. He one o’ dem Britishers, yuh reckon?”

Lettice observed him more closely; then she gave an exclamation of surprise. “Why Aunt Hagar, it is Pat — poor Patrick Flynn!”

“Is dat so? I says, ‘whar I see him befo?’ Dat jes’ who.”

“But how did he get here?”

“I jes’ drug him along. I right spry yit, an’ I git him a little way an’ den drap him an’ git mah bref twel I gits him to de boat. I say ef he a fren’, I boun’ to cyo’ him up, an’ ef he a Britisher — what yuh reckon I do, Miss Letty?”

“I don’t know. Don’t let us talk of that. It would be hard to decide. As it is, I am very glad it is poor Patrick. He should be taken at once to Aunt Martha’s — but no, he probably escaped from some British ship, and was shot while trying to get away. We shall have to keep him in hiding till he gets well.”

“Das what I say, an’ dat why I ast yuh come look at him. I say Miss Letty so sma’t she know ef he a Britisher, fo’ all dem clo’es he w’ars.”

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“I hope he will get well,” said Lettice. “What a joy it will be to his mother if he does. It is just as well that she should not know that he is here, for if he should not recover, she would have the double grief of losing him. Take good care of him, Aunt Hagar, and I will send over some things for him from the house. I will tell Sister Betty. Perhaps she will insist on having him removed to our house, although I really think he is much safer here;” a wise decision, as was proved true before the week was out.

It was late one rainy evening that Rhoda and Lettice were sitting in the open doorway, listening to the patter of the rain on the leaves. “I feel very dreary, and full of forebodings,” said Lettice. “I suppose it is because the autumn is so near. I always hate to see the summer go, and I believe that somehow Aunt Hagar has scared me into thinking something dreadful is going to happen.”

“Something dreadful is happening all the time,” Rhoda answered. “I certainly think that an ignorant old woman’s vagaries have nothing to do with it. I am not so superstitious.”

“Then you are not a descendant of a Salem witch,” returned Lettice, laughing.

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"Yes, I am, and that perhaps is why I abhor superstition," Rhoda spoke in all seriousness. "One of my ancestors was accused of witchcraft, but fortunately the delusion ended before she was executed by the fanatics who hounded the poor innocent creatures to their death. Hark! What is that?"

There was a sound of running feet; of shots fired; of sudden cries. The two girls clung close together, and Betty hurried to the door, while the house servants gathered around, quaking with fear.

Presently from out of the gloom a dark figure staggered toward them and, stumbling, fell at their feet; then another rushed past them into the house. He blew out the candle Betty held and disappeared. Outside was a clatter and a clamor. A swearing, threatening band of redcoats surrounded the house.

For a moment the three women stood transfixed with horror: then Lettice sprang indoors and blew a shrill whistle which brought from the quarters those negroes who had not gone into hiding at the approach of the soldiers. Their appearance added to the rage of the enemy. The leader struck a light, and taking the candle from Betty's nerveless hand he relighted it. "Aha, some pretty girls!" cried out one of the men behind him.

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"We'll find the vile deserter, and then we'll have some sport with the ladies, eh, boys? Here's my choice." And he seized Rhoda, who shrank back with a faint moan. This but added to the man's delight and drew her nearer. But at this moment the prostrate man on the porch, who by painful effort had dragged himself to the sill of the door, feebly raised the pistol he held, fired, and Rhoda was free to rush out of the open door into the darkness.

Those inside were sobered down. "Here, men, search the house," said the leader, sternly. "Fire on any one who dares to stand in the way."

"What shall we do! What shall we do!" Lettice moaned in despair. But Betty had rushed upstairs to her baby, and Rhoda was not in sight. The figure by the door had crawled out into the gloom again. How many of the enemy might be outside Lettice could not determine, and she stood trembling, daring neither to leave the house nor to follow the men who had gone to the upper rooms.

Finally she ventured out upon the porch. Near the door Rhoda crouched, and in her lap rested the head of the wounded man whose shot had felled her assailant. She was murmuring incoherent

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words. Lettice drew near. "Rhoda, Rhoda," she whispered, "who is it?"

"Oh, Lettice! Oh, Lettice, he is dying!" she cried in a shaken voice. "It is Jamie! Jamie!"

Lettice dropped on her knees by the side of the dear lad who lay very still. Lettice lifted his hand and held it between her own, her tears falling fast. She did not heed the tread of the men who returned from their fruitless search. "The miserable wretch has escaped us somehow," as in a dream she heard one say. "This is the second we have lost this week." He leaned over and touched Lettice's cheek. "Get up here, girl. I want to look at you," he said.

Lettice, with streaming eyes arose and with clasped hands approached the leader of the band. "Sir, yonder dying man is my dearly loved brother," she said. "Will you not leave us alone with our great sorrow? We would be but triste companions for your men. Take what you will, but leave us these last few moments sacred from intrusion."

The man stood looking at her a moment; then turned on his heel. "The presence of a lovely female in distress was always too much for me," he muttered. "We will pursue our search further,

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and perhaps will pay you a visit later. We will respect your desire to be alone. We, too, have lost a friend.” He nodded toward the hall where his comrade lay.

“He has gone beyond our resentment,” said Lettice, gently. “We will bury him in our own graveyard, unless you wish to bear him away with you.”

“No, he will rest as well in one spot as in another,” returned the man. “We will continue our duty and leave him to your kind offices.”

He then gathered his men about him and strode away.

Betty had followed the searching party downstairs, and now appeared with the candle. She held it so its rays fell on Jamie’s white face. “Jamie!” she cried. “Our Jamie! Oh, what terrible thing is this?”

He opened his eyes and smiled to see Rhoda bending over him. “I saved you, dear, didn’t I?” he whispered.

“Yes, you saved me,” she controlled her voice sufficiently to answer.

He let his gaze rest a moment upon her, and then he looked at Lettice. “Kiss me, little sister,” he said. She leaned over and kissed his pale lips,

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One of his hands stirred as if seeking something, and Rhoda slipped her fingers in his. He gave them a slightly perceptible pressure. His eyes, large and imploring, searched her face. She understood what he would ask, and she, too, leaned over and kissed him solemnly, and into the searching eyes crept a satisfied look.

"Can we not get him into the house?" said Betty, in distress. "Is there nothing we can do?" For answer there was a quiver of the lad's eyelids, one sigh, and then his young heart had ceased to beat.

Down the road the British soldiers were disappearing. The three women sat sobbing convulsively. They had no thought for past or present danger, nor for anything but the presence of this great sorrow.

After a while one of the colored men stole up. "Dey all gone, Miss Betty," he said. As he spoke from the house appeared before them another figure, and some one dropped upon his knees and covered his face with his hands. "Jamie, Jamie, little brother!" he groaned. "Would to God I had been the one!"

The startled women lifted their heads. "Brother Tom!" cried Lettice. "Oh, Brother Tom!" Then

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Aunt Hagar’s words returned to her, and she repeated: “‘The dead shall be alive, and the alive shall be dead.’ Oh, Brother Tom, it is Jamie, our Jamie!”

“Who lost his life in saving mine,” said the young man. “Let us bear him indoors.” And tenderly lifting their burden, they laid him in the great hall.

Lettice felt that it was good to have this lost brother to soothe and comfort her, albeit his return brought no joy, for the shadow was too great. She was confused and heart-broken, so that no explanations were offered that night. Lettice had but asked, “Are you safe here, Brother Tom?” and he had replied: “Safer than elsewhere. They have searched here once and have not found me; they will not come again at once, and we shall be gone before another day. I cannot leave you here to be exposed to these dangers, little sister, and we must get off to Baltimore as soon as ever we can.”

Even the next day they asked no questions, for in the evening, at sunset, they laid Jamie to rest in the old graveyard, and in one corner they buried, too, the British soldier who had met his death through Jamie’s last effort for Rhoda. Friend

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and foe, the service was read over them, and they were left asleep, with all differences forever stilled.

Rhoda, in her self-control and reticence, gave little evidence of what she felt, and it was only when Lettice saw the anguish in her eyes that she realized that Rhoda's best love was buried with Jamie; and when she returned to the house she remembered the packet which Jamie had given her. She followed Rhoda to her room to give it to her. The girl was lying, face down, upon the floor, in tearless grief. She did not hear Lettice's light tap at the door, nor did she heed her entrance. "Jamie, oh, my darling!" she moaned. And Lettice, with eyes overflowing, put her arms around her. "Dear Rhoda," she said, "he left something for you." And into her hand she gave the little packet.

Rhoda's cold fingers closed over it, and in a minute she sat up. "Stay with me, Lettice," she begged. "We will open this together." She reverently undid the little box. On top lay a paper on which was written: "For Rhoda, from one who loved her with all his heart. God bless you and keep you and make you happy, my darling. From Jamie." There was a case underneath. Rhoda lifted it out and touched the spring, to disclose a

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lock of curly auburn hair and a miniature of Jamie. As his bonny face smiled up at her, Rhoda gave a great cry and shed the first tears her eyes had known since that moment when his spirit passed.

“It is so like, so like,” she murmured. “How I shall treasure it, Lettice. My bonny Jamie, how shall I live through the long years? And you will never know how much I loved you.”

“He knows now,” said Lettice, softly. And she went out, leaving Rhoda more comforted by this than by anything that could have come to her.

CHAPTER XV.

Jubal.

THE next day the two girls parted, not to meet again for many a long day. Aunt Martha had received a letter from her husband, in which he begged that she would leave the plantation and return to Baltimore. He had heard of the depredations along the Chesapeake, and was filled with anxiety for her. Therefore she concluded to follow his advice, and made ready to go back to her city home. Betty, likewise, vowed that she could not remain, for these late scenes had completely unnerved her, and she decided to pack up and go to her father in Kent County, and Lettice agreed to go with her, after receiving the approval of her brother Tom as to the step.

“I will hunt up William,” he said, “and will report to him of your movements.”

Before he left, he told them of how he had been picked up by a British vessel, on that day, so long ago, when he had fallen overboard, and how he had

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fallen into the captain's humor when he pretended to believe he was one of his own men, and he had joined the service, determining to escape when he had enough of it. Later on he found himself on board a vessel on which were his old acquaintances, Pat Flynn and Johnny Carter. The three put their heads together and laid plans by which they might manage to get away. Tom was the first to make the attempt, and one dark night dropped overboard. He had not given his true name to any one during all this time, nor did he do so when he was picked up by an American vessel.

"I shall never forget," he said, "how bravely a young lieutenant stood by me. He was taking in a prize when he sent out a boat to pick me up, and after I told him my story, he swore he would never give me up, though he died for it. He had a chance to prove his words not long after, and stand by me he did, to such an extent that a fight was on before I knew it, and we carried in two prizes instead of one. But as ill luck would have it, on my way home I was taken prisoner just outside our own bay, for the vessel on which I was returning had a little set-to with a British cruiser, and I was nabbed and brought in. But home was too near for me not to make desperate efforts to get to it, and so I did, with what result you

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see. I hope Pat got away. Poor fellow, he was bent on it, if chance offered."

"He did then," Lettice was able to tell him, and she gave an account of him; then begged Tom to continue his story.

"As I was making for shore," he went on, "swimming up the little creek I knew so well, whom should I see at the old landing where we always kept the boat, but some one else getting ready to row across; and who should it be but Jamie. I did not know him, for he was only a little chap when I last saw him, but he recognized me, and was overjoyed to see me, in spite of all my misdeeds, and we started off, when pell-mell came a party of British after me. The best thing we could do was to try to cut across and reach home the long way, instead of coming over the creek. So we landed, and at first got along very well, but the wretches, piloted by some one who knew the way, caught sight of us just before we reached here. Jamie kept encouraging me, and said if we could but get to the house it would be all right, and he reminded me of our old hiding-place; but I tripped and fell over the roots of the old locust tree, and Jamie, never thinking of saving himself, stopped to help me up. I cried out to him to go on, but he would not, and he was hit just as we reached the steps. I didn't

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even know it, for he called out, 'I'm right behind you, Tom', and — " he stopped short and could not go on. Lettice was sobbing, her face against her brother's broad shoulder.

Betty's tears were falling fast, and she said unsteadily, "Greater love hath no man than this."

"Go on, Tom," said Lettice. "Our dear one is safe; oh, so safe."

"God grant that when my time comes, I shall not forget his example!" said Tom, brokenly. He was silent for a moment, and then went on with his story. "I had the wit to blow out the candle, and I ran upstairs to the little closet under the eaves at the end of the garret, that was struck by lightning and boarded up afterward; you know the place, and how it can be reached from the roof by going down the scuttle on that side."

"They hunted through the garret well," said Betty, "but there was so much piled up this side that they never dreamed there could be any one beyond. I had forgotten the place myself, though William has often told me how you boys used to hide there and make a playroom of that end of the garret."

"Jamie had suggested it as a good place, and told me I would find it just the same, so I con-

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cealed myself till, through the chinks, I saw the rascals go off, and then as Jamie had not come, I was seized with a mighty fear for him, and could not stay. It will be sad news for our father."

"Yes; but there will be good news for him, too," Lettice tried to comfort him by saying. "We have you again."

A little later, with a quiet good-by to her brother, she parted from him and made ready for her own departure. Lutie, her unwilling helper, dawdled so persistently over the packing that Lettice at last spoke up sharply. "We'll never get ready at this rate. I'll leave you here to be gobbled up by the British if you don't move faster, Lutie." But this threat did not seem to have the desired effect, for, though Lutie hung her head, she looked more cheerful, and Lettice, bending down, regarded her searchingly. "I believe you want to stay," she said severely. "I believe you want to desert your mistress, Lutie."

Lutie's head hung still lower. "No, ma'am, Miss Letty, 'deed I doesn't; but I wisht yuh wa'nt gwine."

"Why? You are so scared of Cockburn and his men, and yet, now there is danger, you don't want

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to leave. Ah, I see; it is Jubal. And what does Jubal say, pray?"

"He say dey ain' gwine tech me, but dey gwine run yuh-alls off. An' he say ef he'd a knowed hit were Mars Torm what runned f'om 'em, he'd foun' a way ter git him home better'n de way he come."

"Humph!" Lettice was thoughtful. "Lutie," she cried suddenly, "I believe it was Jubal who informed on him. It was Jubal who showed those wretches the short way here, and he had caused your dear Marster Jamie's death. Oh, the wretch! Why did I spare him?"

"'Deed, Miss Letty, he ain't gwine hu't a hair o' yo' haid; Jubal ain'. He turr'ble bad over losin' Mars Jeems; he weep, an' mo'n, an' go on; 'deed he do, Miss Letty. He sutt'nly fon' o' Mars Jeems. Ev'ybody love him, Miss Letty, an' Jubal nuvver do him no ha'm, please, Miss Letty."

"Hush, let me think." She sat with her cheek pensively resting in her hand, thinking deeply. All at once there was heard a clatter below. "Hark!" she cried, starting up. "See what that is, Lutie."

A sharp rap on the door interrupted her, and without waiting a response the room was entered

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by two or three British soldiers. "We demand that you give up the deserter who has taken refuge here," said the foremost one.

"No deserter is here," replied Lettice, steadily.

"I must beg leave to contradict you," said the man, looking admiringly at the girl so fair and slight in her black frock.

"I speak the truth," she returned. "You are at liberty to search the premises. Look for yourselves."

"We must press you and your maid into our service," said the man. "Here, you wench," he turned to Lutie, "go with your mistress and show us where the man is hidden." He drew his pistol and touched the cold muzzle to Lutie's temple. The girl gave a stifled scream, and Lettice grew paler.

"You may use whatever force you choose, but you will not succeed in finding any one hidden here," she said. "I have three brothers; one left us something like a week ago—"

"To join your wretched militia, I suppose, and that makes this place our property. We are ordered to spare only non-combatants and their possessions. Help yourselves, boys. Well, miss, the others, where are they?"

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"My eldest brother has gone to join the younger."

"Then it is the third we want. Hand him over. Where is he?"

"Lying in our little graveyard," Lettice answered brokenly, "slain by one of your bullets. He who had never done wrong to friend or enemy lies there." She covered her face with her hands, and sobs shook her.

The man was silent for a moment; then he said more gently: "My dear young lady, we had what we supposed to be reliable information on the subject of our deserter. One of your own men told us we should find him here."

Lutie gave a smothered exclamation, and Lettice, dropping her hands from her tear-stained face, said, "Could you point him out to me?" She would have her brother Tom get as far on his way as possible; it was policy to detain these men, and she would know who was this snake in the grass.

"Yes; I think there would be no difficulty in identifying him," replied the man. "Go out, Clarke, and see if you can find the fellow. Bring him in here, and see what he will say when confronted by his mistress. If the fellow lied—" The click of a trigger told what would happen.

Lettice with bowed head waited results. **Lutie,**

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trembling in every limb, cast scared glances at her mistress.

In a few minutes was heard the tread of the returning soldier, and Lutie fell on her knees, clasping Lettice's skirt. "Spare him, Miss Letty, spare him," she murmured.

"Get up, wench," cried one of the men. "Let your mistress alone. See here, captain, she's not a bad-looking jade. I'll help myself to her, by your leave, and ship her to my wife."

Lutie leaped to her feet and rushed toward the in-coming figures of Jubal and his guard. Jubal, with dogged expression, came slinking in behind the soldier. "Found him easy enough," said the latter. "Here, get out of the way, girl." He gave Lutie a kick.

"Save me! Save me, Jubal!" Lutie wailed. "Dey gwine sen' me off, an' I nuvver come back no mo'. Oh, save me, Jubal!"

"Shut up," cried the captain. "Here, boy, didn't you tell us there was a deserter around here somewhere?"

"Ya-as suh, I—I—done said so," Jubal stammered.

"Well, where is he? This lady protests that he is not here."

JUBAL.

Jubal rolled his eyes upon his mistress, and then, with chattering teeth, said, "He were here, suh."

"Jubal," said Lettice, solemnly, "do you mean your Marster Tom?"

Jubal looked from one side to the other. "I didn' know hit were Mars Torm, in de fus' place, Miss Letty, an' when I fins dat out, I skeered to say nobody heah. Beside dat, Mars Torm gimme a whuppin' oncet."

"And you deserved it," cried his mistress. "You ham-strung his colt because the creature kicked you when you were stealing a ride on him, and you deserved worse than a whipping. You always were a bad fellow, Jubal. I wonder that father did not sell you long ago. I would to Heaven he had!"

"Then your man spoke the truth. There was a deserter here," said the captain, turning to Lettice.

"There was, if so you choose to consider him, but he is gone. He left us this morning, and when you arrived he was far on his way."

"Why did you not say so at once?"

"That he might be farther on his way."

"Ah-h!" The man smiled. "Well, miss, we'll

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search the place, anyhow. There may be other things to learn, and we'll take your maid as a punishment to you for defying his Majesty's servants. We will leave your loyal man to your tender mercies."

Lettice laid her hand on Lutie's shoulder. "I'd rather you'd leave the maid, sir. It seems to me the man is more devoted to your cause than mine."

"Oh, Jubal, save me, save me!" Lutie wailed.

"Stop that noise," said the captain, sternly. "Here, boy, I want you. We'll have a lark, my men. The man shall fight for the maid. If he puts up a good fight, we will let her go, and if he doesn't, we will take her. Give him a sword, Clarke. We'll have fair play." But as soon as Jubal saw the sword and felt himself freed from the grasp of his captor's hand on his shoulder, with one wild yell, he rushed out pell-mell, head over heels, every soldier after him.

"Now's your chance," cried Lettice, to the terrified Lutie. "Run, Lutie, run to the attic. I'll hide you." And in the same place that had offered shelter to her brother a few days before, she hid the girl, and then she ran lightly downstairs. She reached her room before the soldiers returned,

JUBAL.

and was busied with her packing when they again appeared, laughing and shouting.

"The fellow had nimble heels," said the captain. "He got away, and I venture to say he'll not stop this side of Baltimore, unless Clarke catches him, for he is still in pursuit. I've told him he can have him if he catches him, and Steele, here, will take the maid. Where is she?"

"That you will have to find out for yourselves," returned Lettice, dauntlessly.

"Aha, you refuse to tell? What shall we do about it, Steele? Shall we capture the mistress instead? We might take her a short trip to Kent Island for her health, eh, Steele?"

"Divil a bit, will ye," cried a voice at the door. "Ye murtherin' spalpeens, ye'll take Miss Lettice, will ye? Ye'll take this!" Then crying, "Come on, bhys!" Pat Flynn, laying about him with cudgel and sword, so lustily began his defence of the girl, that in a moment one man was disabled and the others had fled, pursued by Pat with his wild Irish yell and his shouts of: "Come on, bhys, we'll not lave the villyuns a whole hair to split. Come on, the whole pack of ye!" Lettice, seeing that the "bhys" existed wholly in Pat's imagination, speeded his rescue by whistling

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up the dogs and setting them on the fleeing men who, with dogs worrying them, an Irishman's shillalah setting their heads buzzing, at last got off the place, vowing vengeance.

"We've no time to lose," said Pat. "They'll like be on us again as soon as they can get rayin-foorcemints. We'll have to get out purty quick, Miss Letty. Where is Miss Betty?"

"Oh, I don't know. How did you happen to come just in the nick of time? I didn't know you were well enough to show such strength."

"'Tis all the doin's of the old naygur woman, sure, Miss Letty. She's that grand a nurse I never saw. I'd have been away from here this good bit, but she advises me to lay low, sayin' there's trouble brewin', an' I might be needed. 'Twas she, the cute old owl of a crittur, that give me the hint to slip in on ye aisy loike this mornin', 'fur,' says she, 'there do be some o' thim divils o' ridcoats goin' in the direction of the great house, Misther Pat,' says she, an' I picks up the shillalee I've been havin' by me this week back, an' off I goes. The swoord, 'twas me luck to find outside the dhoor. Ye'd betther not be wastin' toime, Miss Letty, dear."

"But that wounded man in my room?"

JUBAL.

"Lave him there. He'll git no bettther place this long while, I'm thinkin'. I'll be afther gittin' the horses and carriage ready as quick as I can, Miss Letty, an' do you an' Miss Betty thry yer purtiest to git off."

"Betty! Sister Betty!" Lettice's call rang through the silent house. "Oh, where are you?" She ran up and down stairs, and at last from the drawing-room came a smothered answer, "Here."

"Come out from your hiding-place. Wherever you are, come quick." And from behind the pile of green boughs placed in the fireplace to screen it, a grimy, sooty Betty appeared, with her baby in her arms. The little fellow had kept a noble silence, although but half understanding that there was a cause for fear. Every servant on the place had made for the woods when the word had gone forth that the redcoats were chasing Jubal. Even the house servants had not been able to resist joining in the general stampede, and Lutie, up in the little closet, alone remained.

"Hurry out and get into the carriage," cried Lettice. "It is around by the side of the house. Pat Flynn is there. Hurry, hurry, Betty; don't stop to wash your face. I am coming in one minute."

Betty caught up a bag of the articles she had

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already packed, and Lettice called from the window to Pat to please try to get her trunk on behind. Then she skurried about, picking up this thing and that, and thrusting it into a pillow case which, when full, she pitched out of the window. This done, with fleet steps she ran up to the attic. "Out with you, quick, Lutie!" she cried. "Come as quick as you can, or you will get left behind." And Lutie, after scrambling out on the roof and down the chimney on the other side, reached her mistress, who stood waiting for her. "You will be safe, Lutie, if you hurry!" she told her. "Come on. Don't stop to get anything." She grasped the girl's arm and fairly dragged her down the steep stairs. Yet, pressed for time though she was, she could not forbear stopping at the door of her room to look in at the man who lay on the floor. He was the same who had claimed Lutie. A sudden thought of Jamie froze all compassion from Lettice's breast.

"Sir, we leave you to the tender mercies of your own friends," she said. "You see I mean to keep my maid. You cannot send her to your wife." Then she turned with a gentle smile to Lutie. "Come," she said, "we will go, but I think we may never see the old house again, and I do not think you will ever see Jubal again, Lutie."

JUBAL.

The maid caught her mistress's hand in both of hers and laid her smooth brown cheek upon it. "Yuh loves me better'n Jubal does, Miss Letty. He lef' me. He wa'n't willin' ter fight fo' me. Yuh didn't run an' leave me, Miss Letty. De Lord bless yuh, my Miss Letty. I don' spec I uvver see dat fool Jubal agin, an' I don' keer. I belongs ter yuh, an' I is say my pra'rs ter God A'mighty fo' dat till I dies."

"We take our leave of you, monsieur," said Lettice with a sweeping courtesy, as she turned to leave the doorway. The man shook a feeble fist at her as she disappeared.

"To leave my room so occupied is dreadful," said Lettice; "yet better that than to be dragged from it myself. Good-by old home," she cried, waving her hand. "We may never see you again."

"Don't say so," Betty entreated. "I want to think I am coming back soon." But she, too, gazed out as long as she could, and until the trees hid the last bit of the white house.

True enough, it was a last look, for an hour later a band of angry men appeared, who, after having rescued their fallen comrade, plundered the house and set fire to it, and by night only a mass of smouldering ruins remained.

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The carriage was driven along at a lively pace, Pat proving himself as good a driver as a fighter. He had fully recovered from his wounds and was eager to get back to Baltimore, to see service, and to find Mr. Joe. Young Tom Hopkins had started for the North to join his father. "To show him that I mean to do something to wipe out my past record," he said.

Pat would not give any credence to the belief that Joe was lost. "He's gone off to some av thim furrin countries, an' is lookin' out fur prizes. He's not lost at all, to my thinkin'," he said. This Lettice wrote to Patsey, who was much comforted thereby.

Patsey, too, had retreated from her home to a safe distance, and was with friends in Washington. She had begged Lettice to go with her, but Lettice had refused, saying that she would be better content in a quiet place, where the merry ways of her little nephew would bring her more solace than could anything else. She devoted much time to the little fellow, who grew more and more winsome every day, and was so adored by Betty's parents that he was in danger of being spoiled.

During the remainder of the year Lettice passed in a quiet village in the county of Kent. Betty, glad enough to be with her own family, soon regained her

JUBAL.

spirits ; and Lettice herself, deeply as she grieved over the loss of her brother, was not un comforted by the return of her eldest brother, and by the assurance of being in as safe a place as was afforded. Tom, be it said, had thrown himself heart and soul into the war. He had too many scores to settle, not to deal such blows as opportunity allowed him. For a month or so life was very peaceful for Lettice, and then came a new trouble : Lutie disappeared. Whether she had stolen off of her own accord, or whether she had been captured, could not be discovered. Lettice firmly believed the latter to be the truth, and mourned her little maid with real sorrow

CHAPTER XVI.

A Time of Rest.

THE winter passed without special incident to Lettice and the household where she was sheltered, but the spring brought a renewal of depredations along the shores of the Chesapeake, and again Cockburn and his men were dreaded and feared. It was one day in the summer of this year of 1814, that Betty and Lettice, sitting out on the porch, discussed soberly their year's experience.

"Rouse yourself, Letty dear," said Betty. "Do not look so sad. I wish we had not started this topic. I know what memories it has stirred, but you are too young to let your thoughts dwell on grief continually. Here, take the boy; he has been fretting to go to you ever since we came out here. I shall be jealous of his love for you after a while."

Lettice held out her hands for the pretty child who, clutching his mother's finger, took a step forward, tottered, and then threw himself with a gleeful laugh into Lettice's arms. "Pretty boy, he will

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soon toddle about everywhere," said Lettice, hugging him up close to her. "I am so glad you are not old enough to be a soldier, baby; and I hope there will be no more wars in your lifetime." She sighed, and laid her cheek against the child's sunny hair.

"There, Lettice, don't be so doleful. Let me see, what can we talk about that will be more cheerful? Did you not have a letter from Rhoda yesterday?"

"Yes, I did. She is at home in Boston, and writes that the blockade is exciting them up there; that the cry against the administration is louder than ever, and that they are in a state of fear and dread, continually."

"And what of Mr. Clinton? That is a subject which I think might interest you."

"She didn't mention him," replied Lettice, shortly.

"Does he know that you have learned of his innocence in the matter of the papers?" Betty asked, after a short silence.

"Yes, I wrote to him as soon as I knew. I thought I could not do less. It was right, wasn't it, Sister Betty?"

"It certainly was. Well?"

"He never has answered my letter."

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"Then he is certainly very rude, and entirely unworthy of my little sister's regard."

"But think what a dreadful charge it was; no wonder he cannot forgive me."

"He should have written, anyhow."

"But if he had nothing but resentment to express, it was better that he should not, I think. At all events, I have said I am sorry, and I can do no more. I acknowledged that I had formed hasty conclusions, and was as humble as I could be."

"Which was an acknowledgment against your will, I know. He should have appreciated the fact that it went against the grain for Lettice Hopkins to eat humble pie for the sake of any man. You liked him a little, Lettice?"

"I liked him very much at one time, but I never liked him well enough to give up all for him. I should always have disagreed with his opinions. We quarrelled often, and after all this, it would be impossible for us to forget what had come between us. Besides, after the sorrows I have had, I never, never could care for any one who sided with those who were the cause of them."

"And Rhoda, what does she say? Rhoda was very fond of our dear Jamie, I well know."

Lettice did not reply for a moment. She was

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rocking her little nephew, whose eyelids were beginning to droop over his bright eyes. "He is almost asleep," Lettice remarked. "I cannot tell about Rhoda," she went on to say. "She is a very dutiful daughter, and although I think she will never forget Jamie, she is young, and some day she may marry, as it would please her father to have her. Ah me, Sister Betty, trouble makes one feel very old. I was such a careless thing a couple of years ago; but when I think of my two brothers and my father all in peril, of my home destroyed and my friends scattered, is it a wonder that I am sad?"

"No wonder at all, dear child, but I predict happy days for you yet. I see a gallant young officer, splendid in his uniform, riding toward my lady sister, and she all smiles and blushes." Betty leaned over, tipped back Lettice's head, and looked down with laughing eyes at her. "I see the smiles and the blushes," she said, kissing her forehead; then, lifting her head, she gave a start and looked intently toward the gate. "Oh, Letty," she cried, "I see the officer in the flesh! Look yonder, coming up the lane."

Lettice lifted her eyes; then dropped them and continued to rock the sleeping baby until a voice said, "Ah, Miss Lettice, I hoped to find you here.

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What a sweet, peaceful picture is this to a man who has seen only the deck of a frigate for the last six months. May I sit here?" He took the chair Betty had just vacated and leaned forward to put a gentle finger on the baby's soft hair. "How he has grown," he remarked. "I am tremendously glad to see you, Miss Lettice."

"I am very glad to see you, Mr. Baldwin."

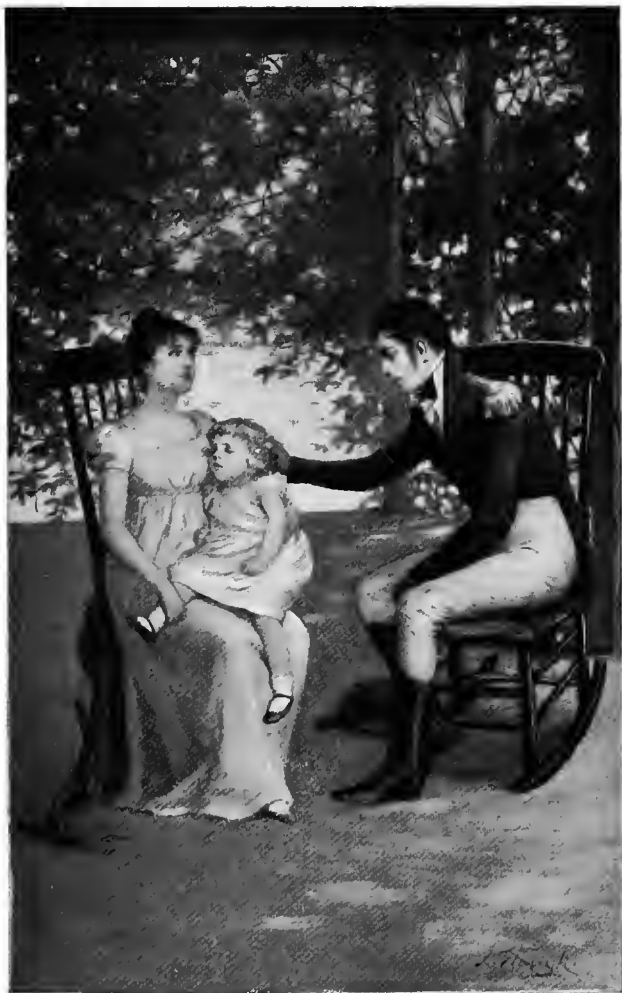
"You look pale, and scarce as sunny and blithe as I remember. But I recall that you have passed through deep waters since I saw you."

The tears gathered in Lettice's eyes, and one fell on the golden head pillowed on her arm.

The young man viewed her sympathetically. "I wish I could have spared you such a grief," he said gently. "Believe me, I feel it deeply. We were companions in great peril, Miss Lettice, and I cannot feel that we are the strangers our short acquaintance would seem to suggest. Will you not tell me all that has befallen you since we met? I have heard only fragmentary reports."

"I must take baby in, and then I will tell you," she responded.

"Let me take him," cried the young man, eagerly. And as gently as possible he lifted the sleeping boy in his arms, touching his lips softly to the fine, pink



"How he has grown!"

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little cheek, and the act won Lettice's favor more than a deed of valor could have done. Over her sad little face broke a smile, and she looked up with such a glance that the young man hummed softly to himself, "'From the glance of her eye shun danger and fly.' Where shall I take him, Miss Lettice?"

"In here on this couch, and then come speak to Mr. and Mrs. Weeks. We all want to hear the war news. Mr. Weeks, you know, lost an arm in the Revolution, and frets that he cannot go fight the British now. He is always very eager for news."

"Then I will satisfy his eagerness as well as I can."

They found Betty's father in the spacious sitting-room. He was a fine-looking old gentleman, gray-haired and erect. Near him sat Mrs. Weeks; she was much younger than her husband, being his second wife and the mother of Betty, whose half-brothers and sisters were all married and living in homes of their own. Betty stood behind her father's chair. She was arranging his cue, for he still clung to the fashions of half a century before, and to either Betty or Lettice fell the daily duty of tying the cue he wore.

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"Mr. Baldwin has just come from the city," Lettice announced.

"And brings news, no doubt. Welcome, Mr. Baldwin." The old man sprang to his feet, and with his left hand gripped the strong right one of the young officer. "Well, sir, we're sitting here pining for news. What is the latest?"

"The best is, that Jackson has ended the war with the Creeks."

"Good! Jackson's a great man; would there were more like him in this fight against England! What next?"

"We've had some reverses in Canada, sir, but —"

"But we don't give up, eh? No, sir, we do not. We may see the country running red with blood, but we'll hold on, at least we Southerners will; we've inherited enough of the bulldog from England to do that. I suppose Massachusetts is still fussing and fuming and threatening to secede."

"I regret to say it is so, and I regret it the more that I am from Boston, myself. I think, sir, that it would be a wise thing if you would all get nearer the city, for I hear that an order has been issued by the British commander, Cockburn, to lay waste all districts along the coast, and to spare only the lives of the unarmed inhabitants; this, I believe, in revenge

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for a small raid made by a party of Americans who crossed Lake Erie and destroyed some buildings at Long Point."

"Humph! what of the outrages committed along our coast?"

"We don't forget them, sir. We will also retaliate when we get a chance."

"By Jove, sir, I wish I had my good right arm, I'd join you. As it is, they'll not find this inhabitant unarmed, despite his empty sleeve." He laughed at his joke, and clenched his fist with a frown a moment after.

"Now, father," Mrs. Weeks protested, "you wouldn't offer fight. You've given enough for your country. No one could expect more."

"It isn't what is expected; it is what I want to do. I suppose the old graybeards up your way, Mr. Baldwin, would call me a terribly hot-headed fellow."

"A certain number might, but we young men honor you, Mr. Weeks. I pray you, don't censure all New England for the attitude of a few. To be sure they are leading men, and the Peace party is strong up there, but we furnish some good fighters when all is told."

"I believe that. I hear Providence has voted money for fortifications in Rhode Island, and that

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the shipmasters in Portland have formed themselves into a company of sea-fencibles, and that even your own state has caught the fever and is preparing for defence."

"Yes, I am glad to say she is touched at last, even though the Federalists still urge their militia to stay at home."

"What a contrast to Kentucky and her gallant governor, leading his men to the front."

"There, father, there," came Mrs. Weeks's soft voice. "You always get excited over that. Mr. Baldwin is a Boston man, remember."

"But not a Federalist," replied the young man, smiling. "You surely will consider this question of getting farther away from the coast, Mrs. Weeks. It is really not safe for you here."

"We can ill leave our place just now," said the intrepid Mr. Weeks. "I am determined to stand by my home till the last. Yet, in the main, I agree with you. Betty and her mother would better take Lettice and the boy and go up to the city."

"Not I," Mrs. Weeks objected decidedly. "If you stay, so do I; but I insist that Betty and Lettice shall leave. It is what your husband would wish, Betty."

"If you could make it convenient to leave to-

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morrow, I would be happy to be your escort," Mr. Baldwin told them. Yet it was only after much protesting on Betty's part that the safety of her precious baby became, at last, the inducement which decided her to go up to Baltimore under Mr. Baldwin's care. Mrs. Tom Hopkins was there, ready to open her house to them, and glad enough to have her loneliness invaded by the cheery presence of a baby.

To Lettice, however, the house was too full of memories for her to feel other than depressed within its walls, and Patsey's eager letters, urging her to come to her in Washington at last had weight even with Aunt Martha.

"The child looks pale and peaked," she said. "She needs young company to cheer her up."

"So she does," Betty agreed. "She has been all these months with staid married people, like myself and my parents, and she needs girls of her own age." Betty spoke sedately, as one whose youth had long past, but Aunt Martha quite approved. She objected to an approach to frivolity in married women. "Patsey still keeps up hope," Betty went on. "I suppose you have had no word of Joe, Aunt Martha?"

"No, but I've had good news from my husband.

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At last we have something besides reverses on the Canada frontier."

"And such glorious victories at sea! It makes one very proud of our little navy that has been so snubbed and scorned."

"Proud indeed! We have some good patriots. I am lost in admiration over those Kentuckians. What an example their governor has set to the people of the country! There is a patriot for you."

"And here's another," laughed Betty, patting Aunt Martha's hand. "You aren't much of a Federalist, Aunt Martha."

"I am not, I confess. I am disgusted with all these squabbles about the administration, when the foe is at our very doors. Suppose we are taxed, we should have no money for the war, else; and to pretend it is unjust and as bad as the taxation of the colonies by England before the Revolution is ridiculous. Next there will be civil war, if this is not stopped. Massachusetts may go out of the Union if she chooses, but I'll not go with her, dearly as I love my own state. And I venture to say that is the opinion of the greater part of her people. It is only the politicians who make all this ferment."

"Good!" cried Lettice. "Aunt Martha, I love

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you for that. I wish Rhoda and her father could hear you. I suppose Mr. Kendall still adheres to his opinions."

"My brother? Yes, he is blind to everything but his resentment toward the administration, I am sorry to say."

"Aunt Martha certainly does improve with age," said Betty to Lettice, as she was helping the latter to pack her trunk. "She speaks as tenderly of Cousin Joe as if he were her own son, and she is perfectly devoted to the baby. Poor Cousin Joe! I wonder where he is?"

"Patsey declares he is in some prison, and I don't doubt but that she is right," said Lettice, lifting the cover of her bandbox to see if her best hat were safely inside.

"I hope, then, he is not in that dreadful Dartmoor Prison," said Betty. "I declare, Lettice, I forgot to ask Aunt Martha about Mr. Clinton. I wonder where he is?"

Lettice gave her head a little toss. "It needn't concern us where he is."

"You're well off with the old love, aren't you, dear?" Betty said. "And as for the new, I'll warrant the way to Washington will not seem very long with him as escort. Yet, I don't see,

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with all the fine fellows here in Baltimore, why you couldn't have chosen one nearer home. You are bound to be a Yankee, at all hazards, it seems."

Lettice laughed. "I haven't chosen any one, Sister Betty, and it is all very silly to take it for granted. Why, honey, I may have a dozen fancies yet."

"I don't believe it. You and Ellicott Baldwin are cut out for each other, I must say, though I oughtn't to, you little monkey, for I don't want you to leave your own state, and go live up there. However will you manage to subsist on baked beans, I don't know."

"Goosey! Am I such a poor stick that I can't cook what I like? And, besides, I could take one of our own servants with me, — Speery, for instance, — and teach her."

Betty, who was sitting on the floor, hugged her knees and rocked back and forth in glee. "So it's all settled, is it? How many times have you seen him, Lettice?"

Lettice blushed furiously. "Nothing is settled with anybody anywhere, silly girl. I only meant that if I ever did have to live in New England, that my home training would prevent me from

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starving, if I should chance not to like Yankee dishes. That is all."

"Of course it is all, Miss Innocence. Let me see; when I was your age, I had been engaged to William a year, and had all my wedding clothes ready. I shall expect an announcement when you get back from Washington."

"It looks like you do want to be rid of me, after all. Do you suppose I want to marry a man who would be at sea half his time, and who would leave me to mourn at home while he was off, nobody knows where? No; give me one of our own domestic swains, I say."

"It's all very well to talk," Betty returned, "but you'll be a Yankee yet." At which Lettice made a face at her, and, having finished her packing, declared that she was tired to death, and that she did miss Lutie more than ever.

"Lutie loved to pack. She would rather have the chance to handle my gowns than to eat, and that's saying a good deal. Poor Lutie!" Lettice sighed.

The next morning she started for Washington, and it was a coincidence that one of the passengers going by the same coach was none other than Lettice's former travelling companion, Mr. Francis Key, who at once recognized Miss Hopkins, but

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who had the discretion not to obtrude himself too frequently upon her attention, since it was evident to his perceptions that the young naval officer who devoted himself to the girl was quite able to entertain her. And though the way was long, the end of the journey did not seem greatly to be desired by either of the two.

"Dear, oh me, Lettice, but I certainly am glad you have come," Patsey said, as the two girls, with their arms around each other, and chattering as fast as their tongues could run, made haste to get to the refuge of Patsey's room, after Lettice was landed on the doorstep of Mrs. Gittings's house in Washington. "That is a fine new spark you had dancing attendance on you," Patsey went on, when the two had seated themselves comfortably by a window overlooking the Potomac.

"Is he not a good-looking fellow?" Lettice returned. "He is from Boston, yet he is as stanch a fighter and as eager for the war as any Marylander or Kentuckian."

"And you like him very much?"

"Yes, but I hope not too much, for he joins his ship to-morrow, and I would not have my heart rent asunder should he never return." Then, seeing the effect of her words, she threw her arms

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around Patsey. "Ah, Patsey dear, I should not have said that. I should have remembered. But no news is good news, they say; so do not let us look for the ill news that flies quickly."

The house where they were was on Capitol Hill, which neighborhood then represented about all there was of Washington. "I am glad you came to-day," Patsey told her friend, "for this afternoon there is to be a fringe party at the Ingles."

"A fringe party?"

"Yes, you know it is quite the fashion to meet around at each other's houses and make fringe for the soldier's epaulets. The government is too poor to buy it, and we can't have our boys go without." Patsey sighed, and Lettice knew of whom she was thinking.

"You'll be my cousin yet, Patsey," she said, and Patsey gave her a grateful smile; but despite their girlish enthusiasm over Lettice's arrival, each noted that the other looked sadder and was quieter than when they last met.

"War is a dreadful thing," said Patsey, shaking her head. "I never knew how dreadful till I came here to Washington and heard the talk that our brave men have been beaten and made prisoners, up there on the frontier, or have been mas-

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sacred by Indians. I wish there were no war. I am patriotic, I hope, but I think the New Englanders are half right when they say, 'Anything but war.'"

"Even disgrace?"

"Even disgrace; for we have had that, in spite of all our fighting."

"But we have had some rousing victories at sea; quite enough to encourage us to keep up a good heart. No, Patsey, with all I have lost, I still believe it was right for us to fight."

"You have more spirit than I, for I would grovel on my knees, give up everything, be a British subject, or anything else, if it would but give me back my Joe safe and sound. You don't know what it is to feel so, do you, Lettice dear? Your heart is not so deeply touched."

"No, I don't believe it is," she replied slowly.

"Yet, I venture to say it beats quicker when a certain person is near," returned Patsey, patting her hand. "Come now, my sister will wonder if we are going to stay here all night without a word to her."

It was, indeed, as Patsey said; war, war, politics, politics, were all that Washington people talked about. The news from Europe was scarcely less eagerly looked for than home news, and when it

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became apparent that Napoleon's power was overthrown, and that England was free to send her transports laden with troops to attempt the subjugation of the United States, the seriousness of the danger threatening their native land aroused men, north, south, east, and west.

"Every seaboard city is in peril," the people said one to another, and one August morning into Washington galloped an express messenger with the news that a large fleet of British men-of-war had been seen in the Potomac. It was evident that, despite the obstinate refusal of the Secretary of War to admit the possibility of an attack upon the nation's capital, precisely that was the object. The militia began trooping into town. Few had uniforms; they were without bayonets, and were so poorly equipped that it seemed a farce for them to attempt to withstand a foe which had just triumphed so signally against Napoleon at Waterloo.

There was much talk, much advice, and great excitement. No one seemed to know what was to be done, or whose orders were to be obeyed, and in consequence of this state of affairs, at first appearance of the British the raw militia, without hesitancy, ran for dear life.

CHAPTER XVII.

A Day of Disaster.

“**H**OW hot it is; how hot it is!” said Lettice, on that memorable morning of August 24, 1814. “How uncomfortable one can be in this world! Here we sit nearly dead with the heat, and full of anxiety for our friends. They are fighting, Patsey, fighting. My fathers! when it is so near home one only then can realize the terror of it. Our poor fellows in this choking, blinding dust, and with the sun pouring down on them, must be in a pitiful state. And how will it end?” She wrung her hands, and began to walk restlessly up and down the floor.

Patsey in a big chair, fanning herself languidly, said, “Letty dear, you’ll not be any cooler for stirring about. Do try and sit still.”

“I can’t. Indeed, I cannot. Hark! Here comes some one.”

The door was suddenly opened, and before them stood a man, his features so obscured by the dust,

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mud, and blood which plastered him from head to foot, that he could not be recognized at first glance in the semi-darkness of the room. He looked at them wildly and burst into a hysterical laugh. "We ran," he said, "all of us. We ran pell-mell, head over heels, every mother's son of us." There was the sound of a choking sob, and he drew his dusty sleeve across his eyes and sank into a chair, breathing heavily.

Lettice ran to him. "William, Brother William," she cried, "it is you! Are you hurt?" She peered anxiously down into his face.

"Hurt? No; didn't I tell you I ran. How could I be hurt?" He fairly snapped out the words, and she looked at him bewildered.

"You poor boy," she said gently, after a pause. "What a sight you are. You must be worn out. Come, get freshened up a little and tell us all about it." She urged him into the next room, and they waited his return in silence. Once Patsey said, "Do you suppose he is crazed, Lettice?"

She gave a short sob. "I don't know. It is not unlikely, after this day's heat and fatigue. He never spoke so to me in all his life. Oh, Patsey, did you see the blood?" Both shuddered, and again silence fell till William appeared, looking

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somewhat more like himself. He stood gazing fixedly at the wall and, without their questioning, began in a hard voice :—

“We were marched and marched from pillar to post for no purpose but to be kept marching it seemed. It was at Bladensburg that the British were. We scarcely believed they were anywhere, but suddenly, when we were exhausted with the heat and the dust and the fatigue of marching, we went out to meet the enemy. Nobody seemed to know anything. All was confusion and want of discipline. We began well enough, but somebody cried, ‘Run,’ and there was a sudden panic. We did rally from that and stayed our troops, but it was no use ; some fool cried out that we were beaten. We were not ! We were not ! By Heaven, it is too much ! We were holding our own well, but the idiots who started the stampede kept up the cry, and, like a flock of sheep, one followed another till the flight was complete. Barney’s marines fought well, I’ll say that for them. I tried to get to them, for I had a dim sort of idea that I could do my part, and at least save my honor by fighting with the sailors, but I was swept along with the rest, and by and by became possessed only with the notion

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of getting on as fast as I could. It seemed to be the universal intention." He laughed again mirthlessly. "We were raw, undisciplined troops, to be sure, and our enemy had fought under Wellington against Napoleon, but we could have beaten them, I am sure of it. Why didn't we? Why didn't we?" He clenched his hands and strode up and down the room.

Lettice watched him wistfully, not knowing what to say to this discouraging tale. "Barney's marines at least did good service," at last she said dolefully to Patsey in an undertone, "and I am sure my brother would have stood his ground if he could, even if the others did run away."

William smiled grimly, and appeared to come to his senses. "I am not here to excuse myself," he said, "but to get you girls out of the city as quickly as possible. The enemy are coming."

"Truly? Here?" they cried, each grasping an arm, and looking at him in alarm.

"Truly indeed." He shook his head with rage, and bit his lip fiercely. "War on paper, in truth. A pothering, chattering set of civilians, without an idea of how war should be carried on, have allowed the enemy to rout us, to beat us, to enter our capital. But there, girls, I'll not stop to vent my anger now.

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You must hurry over to Georgetown as quickly as you can. We'll not be the first. Listen!" He threw open a shutter, and the girls looked forth, to see a terrified crowd of people flocking from every direction. Wagons loaded with household goods were rumbling past the house, all moving in the direction of Georgetown.

Patsey fled from the room. Below stairs already could be heard a commotion of the removing of heavy furniture, of opening and shutting of doors, of hurried footsteps.

"Get your things together, Lettice," said her brother. "I will go below and see if I can help Mrs. Gittings to get away. Where is Steve Gittings?"

"He is with the militia," Lettice told him.

"You mean *was*," returned her brother, his grim humor not deserting him. "Probably he cannot run as fast as I, or he would be here by this."

Lettice for answer took his hand and laid her cheek against it. "You are so tired," she said. "Come, rest awhile. It must have been terrible, marching in this dust and heat."

"It was, but — if there had been any one to tell us what to do or where to go, stiff, choking, miserable as we were, we could have maintained our places ; but it was simply a rabble, with nothing but confused

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orders and no real head. What could we do?" He **suddenly** broke down and, to Lettice's distress, sobbed like a child.

She slipped from the room, and although Patsey and her sister were hurrying to get their most valuable possessions together, she managed to get a glass of raspberry shrub and a bit of bread to take to her brother, for hunger was added to his other discomforts. She found that he had regained his self-control and was busying himself in helping the family to depart.

Mrs. Gittings, for the sake of her children, consented to flee. "But if Steve comes, how will he know where we are?" she complained.

"He will know you are safe, and I am going to stay and see the end of this; as soon as I get you safely over the bridge, I mean to come back here," William told her.

Lettice gave a half-suppressed, "Oh!"

He looked at her and smiled. "I can take care of myself. I proved that this morning, and perhaps I can do some good in some direction. God bless you, little sister." He kissed her and lifted her upon a pile of bedding in the wagon. Mrs. Gittings, with the children crying with fright, and Patsey, scarcely less agitated, were already established in the wagon,

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which at once set out to join the procession. There was no room for another in the already full wagon, and although William insisted in following on foot to see them safely out of town, they persuaded him to remain where he was, telling him that he was too worn out to do more, and that if he should drop by the way, he would but add to their distresses.

The hot sun beat down mercilessly ; the air was filled with stifling dust as the long line of wagons and foot passengers, with not a few on horseback, moved toward the bridge spanning the shores from Georgetown to Virginia. The President and Mrs. Madison had gone over, the latter waiting till the last moment to oversee the removal of a valuable portrait of General Washington from the White House. Many officials also could be seen in the midst of the frightened crowd that poured over the bridge.

Lettice, with clasped hands and quivering lips, gazed at the white walls of the Capitol looming up dimly through the veil of dust. Running away ! Every one was running away it seemed. Her mind took fantastic ideas ; they were a troop of ants swarming from an ant-hill ; they were the animals trooping into the ark ; they were anything but the citizens of an American city fleeing from a ruthless

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foe. The blinding, choking dust enveloped her. It was the pillar of cloud which led the Children of Israel. Yes, there were the multitudes crossing the Red Sea, with Pharaoh and his host behind them, and yonder red flare on the shore was the pillar of fire. These fancies possessed her as the wagon rumbled on, and finally reached Georgetown, where it halted. "And over there is the Promised Land," she said aloud.

Patsey turned and looked at her. "Are you daft, too, Lettice?" she said.

"Yuh ladies bleedged ter git out," said their sable driver; "dat hin' wheel give a mighty ornery creak de las' time we strike a rut, an' I is bleedged ter tinker her up a little befo' we goes on." And out they all clambered, while Simon went off to a neighboring blacksmith shop for assistance.

Patsey, with the hot hand of one little child in hers, stood among the company of refugees, while Mrs. Gittings tried to soothe her fretful baby. "If I only had a little milk to give him, I think he would be quiet," she said. "He is hungry, I know, poor darling. It was useless to bring milk with us; it would not have kept an hour in this heat."

"I'll go and see if I can find any," Patsey said.

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But the little Dolly clung to her, crying, "I don't want my Patsey to leave me."

Lettice spoke up. "I'll go, Patsey. I see a little place over yonder; maybe I can get some milk there." And without further words she crossed the street to a shop on the other side. But no milk was to be had, and she trudged farther off. The sun beat down on her, and she felt ready to sink from exhaustion, for she remembered she had not eaten anything since morning, and very little then. She looked for her purse, but remembered that she had, in her excitement, placed it in her trunk. She stood still in perplexity. She could only beg some milk for a hungry baby; she could not offer to pay for it unless she went back to Patsey for the money. She was about to re-cross the street, when a pair of horses which had taken fright, came dashing along, and she felt herself suddenly snatched back. Looking up she saw Mr. Baldwin.

"Miss Lettice," he cried, "I did not dream it was you. Another moment you would have been under those horses' feet."

"Yes, I know. I was just going to cross, and I got bewildered. I feel a little queer."

"And no wonder, in this broiling sun. I ven-

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ture to say you have had nothing to eat for hours and are tired as well."

"That is about the truth. I was trying to get a sup of milk for Mrs. Gittings's baby. See, she and her sister are over there, by that wagon at which the man is working. We came near having a break-down and had to halt."

"You were on your way to Virginia, then?"

"Yes."

"That is good. I think perhaps I can help you. See, there is Tomlinson's hotel; do you remember it?"

"Where the ball was held? Oh, yes." She looked up at him and smiled, and for the first time noticed that his face did not wear its usual sunburnt hue. "You have been ill!" she exclaimed.

He held up a bandaged arm. "Yes, I have been. My hand and a bit of my forearm were shot away about a month ago."

"Oh, and were you very ill?"

"So, so. We will not talk of it now. Come, I think we can get the desired milk in here. They know me well, for I put up here when I am in town."

"And you have been here, how long?"

"I arrived some days ago, but was scarcely in a

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state to pay my respects. I am out for the first time to-day."

"It is not a very good day, either. I am so very, very sorry to hear of your wound," said Lettice, looking her compassion.

They had reached the hotel by this time. Mr. Baldwin pushed open the door and ushered her into the hall. How well she remembered the place, and that night of rejoicing over victory. Now the triumphant British were entering the city, and the little army of militia was scattered. She remembered Mrs. Madison, as she stood there, the centre of attraction. Now she, too, was a refugee. She had time for no further reflections, for Mr. Baldwin returned with a cup of milk and a couple of slices of bread with some cold meat.

"This is not very inviting," he said, "but it was all I could get, and it will stay you. Shall I carry the milk over to your friends, and will you rest here till they are ready to go on?"

"No, I will go too. How good of you to get this," she added gratefully.

They arrived before the little group waiting by the wagon, to find that Simon persisted that he could not carry the load, for the vehicle was weak

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anyhow, and might break down any minute, even if partly unloaded. "It would be perfectly safe for any one to stay here, don't you think so?" Lettice asked Mr. Baldwin.

"Yes, I think it would ; at least for the present," was the answer.

"Then I will be the one to stay. I can go to some friend's here, or I could even go back to the house. I heard that ever so many families were simply going to lock and bar themselves in, and would not leave. Brother William will be there, and he would look out for me. Please go on without me, Patsey. I am sure the Ingles will take me in. I heard little Mary say that they were not going to leave." And after much protesting against all this, by Patsey and Mrs. Gittings, it was decided that they would go on, and that Lettice should seek such shelter as she could find.

"You are very brave," Mr. Baldwin remarked, as they stood watching the wagon slowly creaking along over the bridge. "But I remember it is not the first time I have seen evidences of your courage. Now, we must find you quarters," he added.

"I should best like to return to Mrs. Gittings's house."

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"I think you are safer here."

"And you? To be sure you have not your uniform, but you will not expose yourself to danger, will you?"

"Not unnecessarily. I am *hors de combat*, as you see, though I still have a right arm I shall put to such service as I can. We must decide upon the safest spot for you, Miss Lettice. Where shall it be?"

"I will return to Mrs. Gittings's, if you will be so good as to take me."

"Please let me persuade you to remain here."

"No, I feel worried about my brother. He was well-nigh crazed by reason of his disappointment and fatigue, and I may be needed. I am not afraid; truly I am not. If he is not there, I can take refuge with neighbors."

"I am very loath to agree to such a decree."

"But if I so greatly desire it."

"Even then I cannot feel that it is a wise thing to do."

"But I assure you that others have remained who have quite as much at stake. Mr. Henry Ingle's home is close by the Gittings'; take me there, and I shall be quite safe." And at last overruled by her persuasions he consented, and, after much trouble, a

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conveyance was found which returned them to the city of Washington, into which the triumphant British were already entering.

The silent house, bolted and closed, showed no signs of life when Lettice and her companion appeared before it. "Do you think your brother is here?" Mr. Baldwin asked.

"I hope so," was the reply. "If we could go around by the back way, we might get in. The key will be in its usual place. Mrs. Gittings was particular that it should be, that her husband might be able to find it, in case he should return. They made their way around to the rear of the house and discovered the key of the side door, where it had been left under an overturned flower-pot. They let themselves in and crept upstairs in the semi-darkness, going from room to room till they found in a heavy slumber, outstretched upon one of the beds, Lettice's brother William.

"Poor fellow," whispered the girl, "he is thoroughly worn out."

She leaned over him, and he stirred slightly; then, conscious that some one was looking at him, he opened his eyes and started up, crying, "Halt! Who goes there?"

"Only your sister, brother dear," Lettice answered.

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"Lettice," he exclaimed. "What are you doing here? What has happened? I thought you safely over the river by this time."

"The wagon broke down, and Simon declared it would not carry so many, so I came back. Mr. Baldwin brought me."

"Mr. Baldwin? Where did you encounter each other?" He peered around and perceived the figure standing in the doorway. "Come in, my dear fellow," he exclaimed. "I owe you a debt for bringing this wayward little sister of mine safely here. Aha! you are wounded? Were you with the marines?"

"No, I was hurt in an engagement down the bay some weeks ago and have been on the invalid list ever since. We beat them that time," he concluded quietly.

"You are fortunate in having so honorable a result. I wish I could say the same."

"Brother William is fairly morbid on the subject of to-day's disaster," said Lettice. "Let us not talk of it."

Her brother turned to her. "I have not heard how you and Mr. Baldwin chanced to meet."

"We encountered each other in Georgetown, where Mr. Baldwin has been staying."

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"And where I tried to persuade Miss Lettice to remain."

"And where I wouldn't," she added. "I thought if anything dreadful were to befall us, I would choose to be with one of my own family, and I do believe we are as safe here as anywhere."

"Perhaps we are," returned her brother, thoughtfully. "If persons keep within doors, I think nothing will likely happen to them, unless the enemy set fire to the city."

"Oh, would they do that?"

"Have they not done so elsewhere? But never mind, little sister, we'll have to take the risks, now we are here. You will not think of returning, Mr. Baldwin, with the streets full of British soldiers."

"No, he must not," Lettice said decidedly.

"I bow to your decision, which is more than you did to mine," he returned, smiling.

"Hark!" cried Lettice.

"They are here," groaned her brother. For now the tread of advancing feet, the exultant shouts of a victorious army, were heard. Night was approaching, close and warm after the hot, debilitating day, when up the avenue came the irregular lines of the British.

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"It is fairly suffocating in here," said Lettice; "let us open the windows." But the words were hardly out of her mouth before a shot struck the closed shutters, and the girl started back with an exclamation of alarm.

"I think we shall have to stand the heat," remarked her brother, quietly. And indeed it would have been a rash thing to open the shutters, for every now and then, from the ranks of the redcoats were sent stray bullets to fall harmlessly, since no one dared to open a door or window.

"If only they don't fire the town," said William, as he walked the floor restlessly. Lettice, with a strained look on her face, sat with clasped hands in one of the farther corners of the room. At last Mr. Baldwin, more venturesome than the others, opened a shutter a little way and peeped out.

"They seem flocking from every direction," he said, as he drew in his head. "The streets are full of them, shouting, singing, firing on whomever they chance to see."

"What was that?" cried Lettice, springing to her feet. For from the direction of the Capitol came the sound of a rattle of musketry, followed

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closely by a second volley, both accompanied by the crash of glass.

“Ah-h,” groaned William, “they have not the manhood even to spare that;” for through the clinks of the shutters could be seen the glare and smoke of an ascending fire. The Capitol was in flames.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A Time of Dreadful Night.

THE night grew darker and darker. Not one of the three in the house thought of sleep, for from time to time the crackle and blaze of some new fire, the roar of the devouring element, announced that one or another building had been sacrificed to the revengeful lust of the enemy. Up and down the streets swarmed the redcoated soldiers, ransacking, shooting wildly, without reason or conscience, at any who dared venture forth not uniformed as were themselves.

With the advancing hours the gathering of a storm became more and more apparent. Sharp lightning vied with the licking flames. Deep growls of thunder drowned the sound of carousals, and the wind, rising to a fury, lashed and whipped the trees, tore away roofs, and shrieked as if in defiance. Soon down came the rain in torrents, in floods, and the flames, so eagerly mounting higher and higher, became less and less aggressive.

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In the battle between the two elements fire was vanquished. Save for the raging of the storm, there was now little noise in the streets, and the occupants of more than one closely shut house ventured to open the windows to let in the cool air which was sweeping away the intense heat of the day.

"It is a merciful interposition of Providence," declared William Hopkins. "I think we can take some rest and feel no alarm while the storm continues. Go to bed, Lettice." And Lettice, feeling suddenly heavy-eyed and weary, now that the strain was relieved, obeyed and soon sank into a deep slumber.

She awoke early, for the sun was shining in at the window which she had left open. She sat up in bed, for a moment bewildered. "Patsey," she called; then suddenly she remembered, and she sprang up, venturing to peep out into the street. As she looked she saw an officer on a white mare galloping up the avenue; a little colt trotted behind; it seemed an incongruous sight in that scene of desolation. The streets were full of bits of paper, some charred and soaked with rain; there were further evidences of the work of plunder, of tempest, and of destruction, but Lettice

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did not dare to look long, for groups of soldiers were becoming more and more numerous, and she did not know what moment a chance shot might come her way.

She closed the shutters softly, dressed herself, and ran downstairs. "I must try to get up some sort of breakfast," she said to herself, as she rummaged through closets and pantry. She was fortunate in finding coffee, bacon, corn meal, and some sour milk. With deft fingers she kindled a fire, and then discovered that the water buckets were all empty. "Water I must have," she said, "and I will have to go and fetch it from the pump. It will be better for me to go than one of the men, for I'm what Brother Tom calls a non-combatant. Poor Tom, I wonder is he safe?"

She sighed, and picking up a bucket, sallied forth into the street. More than one person had ventured out. There were no soldiers near enough to inspire fear, and she felt quite safe as she ran along toward the old wooden pump which stood before the house occupied by her friends, the Ingles. A little girl was sitting on the doorstep. "It's plain to see you're not afraid, Mary," said Lettice, as she vigorously worked the pump-handle up and down.

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"No, I'm not," returned Mary. "I came out to see the soldiers."

Lettice, having filled her bucket, lifted it and set it on the sidewalk. At that moment a British officer, attended by an orderly, came riding up the street. He paused before the pump, and drawing out a silver goblet, summoned his orderly. "Here, bring me a drink of water in this goblet of old Jimmy Madison's," he said.

Then up spoke Mary Ingle. "No, sir, that isn't President Madison's goblet, because my father and a whole lot of gentlemen have got all his silver and papers and things and have gone—" From the doorway some one reached forth a silencing hand, which was placed over Mary's mouth, and the little maid was drawn within doors. Fortunately the officer had been drinking freely and did not notice the candid statement. He quaffed his draught of water and rode off.

Lettice did not tarry either, but lifting her bucket, which weighed down her slender arm, she made ready to carry it home. She noticed that fires were again starting up in every direction, and she felt a quiver of fear for the safety of herself and her friends. What if the whole city should be swept by flames?

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Setting down her heavy bucket, she stopped a moment for rest. From across the street stepped a young officer, gay in his red uniform. "Let me carry that for you, my pretty maid," he said. "It's good water ; I have tasted it, and I'll carry your bucket home for you for a kiss."

"Oh, no." Lettice shrank back.

"Oh, yes, I say." He drew nearer, and, picking up the bucket, held it, laughing. "No kiss, no water."

"Then no water." And Lettice turned and fled, leaving the soldier laughing at his own defeat.

The girl hurried on and entered the gate, which she securely fastened, but behind which she stood for a moment, peeping through the chinks, determining that water she must have as soon as there seemed a chance of getting it. But at that instant she noticed that the sky had again begun to darken, and almost before she could reach the safety of the kitchen, a hurricane swept the city. It suddenly became as dark as night ; the wind, which had been high enough the night before, now arose to the violence of a cyclone. Roofs were torn off, trees uprooted, and the air was full of flying particles. Even things ordinarily supposed to be secure were wrenched from their

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fastenings and went hurtling through the air as if the law of gravitation had suddenly become naught. The rattle of thunder, the sharp lightning, the tremendous downpour of rain—all these were terrifying, and Lettice dared not go on with her preparations for a meal.

Before many minutes down came her brother and Mr. Baldwin. "Up already?" they said.

"Already? Do you think it is still night? It is long past breakfast-time, and I did hope to have it ready for you, but I was so scared I could not go on with it, and besides, I have no water." Then she related her encounter with the red-coat.

"You perverse child, will you never learn prudence?" said her brother, shaking his head.

"I am afraid not," returned she, so earnestly that her brother smiled.

"Anyhow," she said triumphantly, "I saw Admiral Cockburn on his white mare, riding up the avenue this morning. It was when I first got up, and it was so funny to see the little colt trotting on behind."

"How do you know it was he?" her brother asked.

"Mary Ingle told me when I was talking to

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her this morning. Dear me, I wish I had Lutie here."

"I am glad you haven't," returned her brother. "Lutie is a perfect baby, and afraid of her own shadow; she'd be worse than no one at all in all this."

"Gracious!" exclaimed Lettice, "what a report that was! The lightning has struck somewhere very near, but it shook the whole house."

"That was no lightning stroke," Mr. Baldwin declared; "it was an explosion of some kind."

"Oh, I hope nothing has happened to our friends at the Arsenal."

"It seemed to come from that direction."

There was no cessation of the terrible storm, and Lettice finally declared that water they must have. "If I only could have brought my bucket safely home," she said wistfully.

"There is water enough," Mr. Baldwin said quietly, "when it is coming down in sheets like this. Just set something outside to catch it. Here, I will do it." And he picked up a water bucket and placed it where it would soon fill.

"What a goose I am!" said Lettice. "Why didn't I think of that? Did you get very wet?"

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"Nothing to speak of. May I help you get breakfast? What can I do?"

"You may set the table, if you will. Brother William is bringing candles; I am glad of that, for I could scarcely tell meal from sugar in this light."

The three busied themselves in preparing the simple meal and ate it with a heartiness which long fasting supplied. "There are more fires lighted; I believe every building of any importance has been set fire to," said Lettice, dolefully. "And to think of being in the midst of all this dreadful time! I am so thankful for this rain; maybe it will put out the fires. It does seem as if a special providence had sent it. Isn't it a terrible storm! Why, I even saw feather beds go flying through the air."

Mr. Baldwin laughed. "Those feathers probably flew higher than they ever did before," he remarked.

They were feeling quite cheerful since their meal and were now sitting at one of the back windows watching the steadily descending rain. William had left the room, saying he meant to go in to see the Ingles and hear if they had any news to give. "We have shared more than one danger," said Lettice, after a while. "I feel now

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as if when this war comes to an end, there must be a few of my friends who will be linked to me by stronger bonds than those of an ordinary friendship."

"I am glad then that I have been of the privileged few, though I would rather have spared you these sad experiences. I wish I could have borne them for you," her companion said.

"Have you not borne enough?" Lettice gave a glance at the bandaged arm.

"A trifle, compared to that which some suffered, yet sufficient to dash some bright hopes."

"I don't see why," Lettice looked down.

"A man who has nothing but his chosen profession, and who has lost his chances of promotion in that, must stand aside and let others win what neither fortune nor honor will permit him to ask for," he replied steadily.

"But everything is not to be won by fortune and honors."

"Would a man be justified in seeking the love of a woman to whom he can offer nothing but a very uncertain future?"

"If a woman loves a man, does she care to give any one else the right to win her?"

Just then, with a shriek and a wail, a gust of

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wind arose, and hurled against the window a branch wrenched from a tree. It came with such terrifying force as to shiver the glass, and almost simultaneously came a vivid flash of lightning and a terrific crash of thunder. Lettice, stunned and frightened, staggered against the wall and slid helplessly to the floor, affected by the lightning which had struck a tree near by. In an instant Mr. Baldwin was by her side. He lifted her head to his shoulder, murmuring, "My love, my darling, are you hurt?"

She raised her head, half dazed, and looked at him without speaking; then her head dropped heavily on his shoulder again, and he held her thus, till in a few moments this sudden dash of the storm had abated. Then both rose to their feet.

"I wonder where William is?" Lettice said faintly, and suddenly feeling shy. "He—" She did not finish her sentence, for her brother entered the room.

"I've been out," he said, shaking the drops from his hat. "I went first to the Ingles and heard some news there, and then I thought I would look around a little for myself."

"In all this fearful gale?" Lettice said.

"Yes, I knew there would be little danger from

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the redcoats while this storm lasted. Fires are smoldering in every direction. That explosion we heard was caused by the throwing of a lighted torch into an old well where part of our powder was secreted. Twenty-five Britishers were hurled into eternity by the explosion, and many were badly wounded. I think this experience, on the whole, has been too much for Cockburn, for I was told that he is getting ready to leave."

"Oh, I am glad!" said Lettice. "Did none of those flying boards hit you?"

"No, I managed to dodge them, and I didn't go very far. I see you have had an accident here. We must stop up that window; the rain is pouring in."

"Yes." Lettice looked down, and the color which had left her cheeks came slowly back again.

"Miss Lettice narrowly escaped being struck by lightning," Mr. Baldwin said unsteadily. "She was sitting near the window when that tree there was struck, and she was stunned. A heavy branch torn from the tree did the damage to the window."

"And you were not hurt, Lettice? You are sure?" Her brother looked alarmed.

"No, I think not. I felt dazed, and my head

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still feels queer, but I was only a little stunned, I think. I am beginning to feel all right again."

"The wind is dying down, though it is still raining hard. I think the worst of the storm is over."

The rain continued for the rest of the day, but evening brought the tramp, tramp, of retreating feet. Orders had been given that no inhabitants should appear in the streets after eight o'clock; this that the enemy might escape unnoticed. The city, devastated as it was, received final destructive touches from the outgoing enemy, who set fire to every important building still unharmed, as the retreat was being made. The departure of the foe seemed also to be the signal for the cessation of the tempest, for the setting sun shone forth, and the mutterings of thunder died away with the echoing tread of marching feet.

"Free, at last!" cried Lettice, when it became known that the redcoats had really gone.

"Yes, but not safe. We're not out of the woods yet," her brother told her. "Every man of us must fight those fires, or the little that's left will go. Run in and stay with the Ingles, Lettice. Mr. Baldwin and I must go."

"Oh, but—but he is not well enough."

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"I can carry a bucket of water," said the young man, smiling down at her.

"And ask no reward?" she said in a whisper.

He turned around and looked at her searchingly, so that a soft pink overspread her face. "Would you give it?" he whispered back. Then he bit his lip and turned away before she could answer, leaving her half abashed at her own words, and half sorry that she had let him go.

She ran out of the gate to her good neighbors and found them rejoicing at the departure of the enemy, but still in alarm lest the surrounding fires should break forth and destroy the dwellings still standing. However, many willing hands were ready to stifle the rising flames, and forlorn, miserable, wretched-looking as the poor little city appeared, its season of trial was over.

The despoiled capital was a poor abiding-place, but as soon as Patsey and her sister returned, they urged Lettice to stay, rather than to go back to Baltimore, whither her brother was bent on hurrying; for it was said that General Ross had his eyes turned upon that place. "And they will not come here again, for they have taken all there was to take. Bad as it is, there is one consolation — if there is one place above another that is absolutely safe, it is Washington," said

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Patsey. "You would better stay with us, Lettice; I should think you had seen about enough of this war."

But Lettice shook her head. "It is dreadful to think of anything happening to Betty and the baby, and my brother will be there. I must stick by my family through thick and thin." And she set forth, to arrive in Baltimore, there to find every one apprehensive of an attack from the British.

Betty hugged and kissed her, and declared it was dreadful to think of the scenes she had witnessed; and then she ran to her husband and cuddled in his arms, putting her hand over his lips when he attempted to tell her of the defeat. "I won't hear it," she cried. "I don't care if they all did run. I'd a thousand times rather that, than to have you brought home to me dead or wounded. I am tremendously thankful you didn't give them a chance to shoot you. I am so thankful that I cannot consider anything else."

"I believe I agree with you," Lettice joined in. "What do you think of it, Aunt Martha?"

"I think he could do no less, under the circumstances. It was not his fault that there was a retreat, and he would have been foolish to stand up alone and defy the entire British army." At which they all laughed and settled down composedly to hear Let-

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tice's story. Danny curled himself up in one corner, all alert for thrilling adventures, and Mrs. Flynn stood in the doorway, one hand on her hip and the other thoughtfully manipulating her chin as she listened.

"An' now tell 'em your bit o' news, ma'am," she said, turning to Mrs. Tom Hopkins, when Lettice had finished her tale.

"We've heard from Joe," Aunt Martha told them.

"Oh!" Lettice sprang to her feet. "Where is he?"

"In Dartmoor Prison, poor fellow; and that is almost worse than to hear of his death, for it is doubtful if he will ever get out alive."

"How did you hear?"

"Through a fellow-prisoner, who made his escape, and who promised, should he succeed in getting away, that he would get word to us of Tom's whereabouts. We are all working, and my brother is using his influence to get an exchange."

"Would you tell Patsey?"

"I think I would not, just yet — not till we are a little surer that our plans can be carried out."

"Have you anything to tell me?" asked Betty, as she came into Lettice's room that night at bedtime. "William has told me that you saw

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much of Mr. Baldwin, and that you left him but yesterday."

"So we did—but, oh, Betty, he cannot go back into the service, because he has lost his left hand with a part of his arm, and he has no money; and, besides, he wouldn't ask me if he had, for he doesn't think a man maimed and without a profession of some kind would have a right to do it."

"Neither would he. But never mind, my love, I wouldn't make myself unhappy over it; love finds a way. And would you take your Yankee lad single-handed?"

"Now, Betty, you will joke. Yes,"—she hid her face on Betty's shoulder,— "I would, I really would."

"I said you would be a New Englander yet. I shall have to hand you over to Aunt Martha to-morrow and let her teach you how to bake beans."

"But there's no need. You see, he'll not ask for me."

"Nonsense; wait till the war is over. What about Robert Clinton, Lettice?"

"What about him?"

"Yes; you don't care one wee little bit for him?"

"No, no, no!"

"Does your—what is his name?—Ellicott know that?"

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"I don't know. I wouldn't be likely to take him by the lapel of his coat and say, "Mr. Baldwin, I want you should know I don't care for Robert Clinton." Lettice imitated Rhoda's tones so exactly that Betty laughed.

"No, you couldn't do that," she agreed. "Now I have something to tell you. He, like an honorable gentleman, has told William that in a moment of excitement, when he thought you were in danger, he declared his love for you, and —"

"And — oh, Betty, what? He has never referred to it since; and tell me, what did William say?"

"He requested him not to see you or communicate with you till your father's permission could be obtained."

Lettice heaved a deep sigh. "And what did he say?"

"He promised, but asked that you might know; so, as William had no liking to tell you himself, he asked me to do it. So there — my disagreeable task is over. Do you forgive me for my part in it?"

"I thank you for your gentle way of telling me, and I would rather have heard it from you than from William."

"Thank you, dear. Now, never mind, my honey, just bide your time. For myself, I like Mr. Ellicott

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Baldwin mightily. Don't you miss poor Lutie, when it comes to a matter of toilet?" she asked, to change the subject.

"Yes, poor Lutie, I do miss her. Ah, Betty dear, you are truly like my own sister. You understand so well, and I like better to be with you than any one. Alas, where will be our home?"

"I wouldn't bother over that. Let the future take care of itself. 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof,' you know. You have seen evil enough, poor Letty. Good night and sweet dreams;" and she left Lettice to think over all this new situation.

Volunteers were tramping into the city; preparations were going forward for a brave defence, and when Lettice laid her head upon her pillow, it was to dream of future alarms and start up more than once with a little cry. Once Betty heard her and came in to bend gently over her. "She is only dreaming, poor little soul," she murmured. "What a peck of trouble she has had, to be sure."

The morning seemed to realize Lettice's dreams, for Danny came in, his eyes rolling around in excitement. "M-m-miss Letty, dey done comed, dey done comed!" he stammered.

"Who?" cried Lettice, looking up from the flowers she was arranging.

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"De redcoats. Dey ships in de ribber; dey is, fo' sho'. I ain' tellin' no sto'y, Miss Letty."

Lettice knew danger was near, for her brother, who had gone out the night before, had not returned, and she saw that vigorous measures were being adopted for the defence of the city. She thought of Washington and sighed.

"Is yuh skeered, Miss Letty?" asked Danny, who was watching to get his cue from her.

"Not scared, but very anxious. Where is Miss Betty?"

"She puttin' de baby ter sleep. Miss Marthy, she fussin' roun' lak a ole hen."

"Sh! You mustn't talk that way," Lettice chided, in a severe tone. "Aunt Martha," she said, stepping to the window which looked out upon the porch where she was, "do you suppose it is really true that the British are here?"

"Don't ask me, child. I am distracted. Ought we to stay or go? I do want to do my duty."

Lettice smiled. "I don't see that anything will be gained by going; at least, not yet. I think we are about as safe here as anywhere. Oh, Aunt Martha," she clasped her hands closely, "we'll conquer or we'll die. I am sure this time we must drive them back. We have good defences; Mr. Key told me so

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last night, and he said, ‘ We are in earnest this time ; they’ll not find it so easy to get into Baltimore as into Washington.’ ”

Aunt Martha stood considering the situation.

“Where would you go, if you did leave?” Lettice asked.

“Somewhere out of town ; but as you say, no doubt we are as safe here as anywhere we might hit upon. It doesn’t seem a very fitting time to be arranging flowers, Lettice. You’d better be scraping lint ; there probably will be need of it.”

“But the flowers don’t stop blooming, battles or no battles,” Lettice returned. Yet she bore her bowl of China asters indoors, and, taking a roll of linen from her aunt’s hand, she sat down to scrape lint.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Star-Spangled Banner.

FROM time to time during the day came news of a possible engagement. Frigates, bomb-ketches, and small vessels were reported to be ranging themselves in position to cannonade the fort and the town. Off North Point lay the ships of the line. In the night began the debarkation of the British, and by noon the next day a battle was imminent. It was an anxious time for those within the town, whose brothers, husbands, sons, or lovers had gone out to meet the enemy. Aunt Martha religiously refrained from idleness, and vigorously scraped her lint when she was doing nothing else. Lettice and Betty helped her by fits and starts. "But I cannot keep my mind on anything," said Lettice. "I am so nervous, so anxious."

"You'd much better be occupied," returned her aunt, patting a soft pile of her linen scrapings. But Lettice did not respond; she went to the window and looked out. Few persons were to be seen on

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the street. It was raining, and she wondered how those on their camp ground were faring.

All day Sunday there came reports of the further movements of the British, who had by this time landed their troops at North Point; and what might be next expected no one knew, though all feared ill news. "I shall not stay at home from church," Aunt Martha declared, "for if ever there was a time when one should attend to her religious duties, it is to-day. You will come with me, Lettice?"

"I suppose I might as well, for I shall be just as miserable if I stay at home, and I shall at least have the satisfaction of knowing I am doing the right thing by going."

"That is not the right spirit," Aunt Martha objected. "It should be a privilege, and I think you should feel it so."

"Well, I will try to; but I know I cannot keep my mind on the sermon for one instant. I shall be thinking of what is going on outside the city." Yet she accompanied her aunt without further words, and announced at the dinner-table that she believed it had done her good to go.

Shortly after noon of the following day came flying reports that a battle was in progress. Next came the news that the British general, Ross, had been

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killed. After this were various reports, and, throughout the night, stragglers brought in accounts of the day's action. The next morning early came a sudden, ominous sound. Lettice jumped from her bed. It was six o'clock. She ran to her sister Betty's room. The baby, terrified by the sudden noise, was crying with fright. "Isn't it a hideous sound!" said Lettice, placing herself at the foot of the bed. "Hark! it gets worse and worse; it fairly shakes the house to its foundations. Oh, Betty, do you suppose they will get near enough to bombard the city?"

"If they can get past the forts. Pray Heaven they do not!"

All day the sombre sound of the cannonading continued. At three in the afternoon it grew fiercer, and those who waited in terror, now feared that their beloved town would share the fate of Washington. From the windows Lettice and Betty watched the ascending rockets, and as night came on and the fearful booming continued, becoming louder and fiercer, it seemed as if every brick in the house must fall about their ears.

Suddenly the noise increased in volume. It sounded nearer. What did it mean? Betty and Lettice, with one accord, rushed out into the street.

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Throngs of anxious people, with pale faces and terror-stricken eyes, were gathered there. "What does it mean?" they whispered one to another.

All at once, as suddenly, a stillness fell. It was an awe-inspiring silence. Betty clung to Lettice, crying, "Oh, Letty, we are lost!" But the bombs and rockets again began to illumine the sky, though now at a greater distance, and when the morning broke upon those who had sleeplessly kept their vigil in the streets of the threatened city, the danger was over. Baltimore was saved.

That night the British sailed away, and then those who, so short a time before, had appeared a sadly anxious company, driven by fear from their homes, now gayly paraded the streets, cheering and shouting as the triumphant troops marched by.

"I am glad we stayed. I am truly glad, for all that it was so terrible. I am glad to get rid of my recollections of Washington," Lettice exclaimed. "They have gone, Aunt Martha! They have gone, Betty! Do you realize that it was a victory?" And, seizing the baby, she danced him up and down till he screamed with mirth and excitement.

They had hardly recovered from their joy at the victory, and the delight in welcoming home the ones

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who had done so much toward winning it, when other glad tidings came to them. Weak, miserable, fever-wasted though he was, it was a day of rejoicing for them all that brought Joe home again. Big Pat Flynn and William lifted the wasted figure from the carriage to the house, and Lettice, who was on the lookout for him, ran to the door. She burst into tears as she saw the mournful, hollow eyes, and Aunt Martha, close upon her heels, chid her with:—

“That is a pretty way to welcome the boy! Why, Joe—” And then she, too, lost control of herself, and, leaning on Lettice’s shoulder, began to weep.

“That’s a pretty way to welcome the boy!” laughed William. “Here, Betty, can’t you do better than that?” And Betty, whose chin was quivering, gulped down a rising sob and smiled, saying: “You dear Joe, how glad I am to see you! Welcome home, Joe! Welcome home!”

“Heigho, Mars Joe!” came a small pert voice. “Fo’ de Lawd, but yuh look lak a ole rooster what los’ he tail fedders.”

“Halloo, Danny! Where did you pop from? If I look like a scarecrow now, how do you think I looked when I started for home, before I had a good lot of fresh air and something to eat? Why,

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I'm a good-looking fellow to what I was," said Joe, laughing weakly.

Danny snickered, and Aunt Martha turned, saying severely: "Danny, leave the room, and don't let me hear another word from you. Bring Joe into the sitting room, boys, and we'll make the dear child comfortable;" which, indeed, they did, so that within twenty-four hours he was looking better.

Lettice's first thought was of Patsey, and she despatched a letter to her as quickly as possible, and there were at least two perfectly happy persons under that roof when Patsey responded in person.

But on top of this came a sad letter from Lettice's father. "Our dear Tom, my brave first-born, has gone from me," he wrote. "He died to save my life, for, in a hand-to-hand fight, he threw himself between me and my enemy, shouting, 'I'll save you, father,' and he received the blow that would have finished me. I trust that I yet have one son left, and though I would not have him serve his country less well than those that have been taken, I pray he may be spared to us, and I beseech him not to expose himself to unnecessary perils."

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"Dear old Tom," Lettice murmured, with softly falling tears, "it seems as if he returned simply to retrieve himself and to leave behind a loving memory of him. We can be proud of him, now. But oh, Jamie has gone, and Tom has gone, and all I have left is Brother William. Even Lutie is taken from me."

But a few days after this came a surprise for Lettice. Danny, with dancing eyes, and ducking his head as he gave frequent smothered bursts of laughter, appeared at the sitting room door where Lettice sat with her Cousin Joe and Patsey.

"Somebody out hyar ter see yuh, Miss Letty," Danny announced, and then he ran.

"Come back here, you rascal," called Joe. "Haven't you any better manners? Tell Miss Letty who it is." *

Danny rolled his eyes toward the door. "She say I isn't to tell, suh."

"Oh, well, never mind, I'll go," Lettice said. She opened the door and stepped out upon the porch. In one corner stood a figure in blue sun-bonnet and checked gingham frock; it looked strangely familiar. With the sound of the closing of the door the figure started forward, and a soft

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voice said: "Praise de Lawd, dat mah Miss Letty. I is got back."

"Lutie!" cried Lettice, running toward the girl and throwing her arms around her. "Where have you been all this time?"

"'Deed, miss, I doesn't know. Dem Britishers done tek me off an' ca'y me somewhars, I dunno whar nor wha'fo', an' when de man what say he own me gits killed in dat battle yuh-alls has, I gits a chanst to run away, an' I tu'ns mah face todes Baltimo', an' I keeps a-inchin' along, a-inchin' along twel I gits hyar, an' hyar I is. Law, Miss Letty, yuh nuvver thought I done run away mahse'f? No, ma'am, I ain' no such notion. I yo' own gal, an' I don' nuvver want no other mistis." Lettice, in sheer delight, gazed at her as if she could not believe her eyes. "I skeered yuh git ma'ied, Miss Letty," Lutie went on, "an' go off yonder wid dat Mars Clinton."

"You need never be afraid of that," said Lettice, decidedly.

Lutie twisted her bonnet strings around her finger. "Miss Letty, is yuh know what become of Jubal?" she asked miserably.

Lettice shook her head.

"I knows," said Lutie, solemnly; "de po' miz-

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zible sinnah is gone to glory, an' I see him go. Yass, ma'am; dey blow him into kingdom come, 'cause he such a sneakin' varmint, an' he try to do dem redcoats lak he done yuh-alls, an' dey don' stan' no such wucks, no ma'am, an' dey ups an' shoots him. Miss Letty, Danny say young Mars Torm done gone to glory, too. Is dat so?"

"Yes," replied Lettice, "he died bravely, Lutie; poor dear Tom. Come in, now, and pay your respects to Miss Betty and the rest. Aunt Martha will have to let me keep you this time, for I don't intend to have you out of my sight till we are rid of the British for good and all."

Lutie willingly sought Miss Betty, and Lettice reëntered the room she had just left. She saw her Cousin Joe quietly sleeping, one cheek resting on Patsey's hand, which she would not withdraw from its position. Although the lines of suffering were still apparent upon Joe's face, a happy smile played around his mouth, and Patsey's eyes wore a look of supreme content.

That evening, when Lettice's brother William came in, he drew from his pocket a small printed paper in handbill form. "Here, Lettice," he said, "your friend, Mr. Francis Key, has dis-

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tinguished himself. It seems he was on board one of the British ships the night of the bombardment — ”

“A prisoner?” Lettice interrupted.

“Yes; he went to try to gain the release of Dr. Beanes, of Upper Marlborough, and was detained during the engagement. You can imagine his feelings; uncertain as to the result of the battle, and anxiously waiting through the long night for some sign to relieve his doubts and fears. The occasion, however, has given us a beautiful ode. Mr. Key, after being kept some time on board a British vessel, the *Surprise*, was at last returned to his own cartel ship, the *Minden*, and there, on the back of a letter, he wrote the song I have just handed to you.”

“What is it called?” Betty asked.

“The Bombardment of Fort McHenry,” Lettice read from her paper.

“Read it out, Lettice,” said her Cousin Joe, and she began :—

“ ‘ Oh say, can you see, by the dawn’s early light,
What so proudly we hailed by the twilight’s last gleaming ? ”

She read it through to the end to a group of attentive listeners.

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"Fine! Beautiful! A noble production!" came the comments.

"It is not generally known that Mr. Key wrote it," William went on to say, "but his uncle, Judge Nicholson, told me that it was a fact, and that Frank had showed it to him, and that he, being vastly pleased with it, took it to the office of the *Baltimore American* and had a number of copies printed, one of which he gave to me. Every one is singing it, and it promises to become very popular. The tune is that of "Anacreon in Heaven." You know it, Joe; come, join in. Come, Betty, come, Lettice, let us try it;" and the Star-Spangled Banner was given with spirit and fervor. Several passers-by, catching the tune, started up the air and went singing on their way, so that after the song indoors was ended, from the distance could be heard, lustily shouted:—

"'Tis the Star-Spangled Banner! Oh, long may it wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave!"

It was toward Christmas that Lettice, coming into her aunt's room one day, found the good lady pondering over two letters which she had been reading. "Your father and your uncle are on their way home," she announced abruptly.

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"Oh, how very glad I am!" cried the girl. "There are some good things left for us, after all, Aunt Martha; though sometimes, when I think of this war and all it has cost me, I feel as if it had stripped me of everything."

"This war, indeed; yes, I don't half blame my brother for calling it an unrighteous proceeding." She tapped the letter she had just been reading; then she burst out again: "But we would have been cowards not to have fought for our rights. New Englander as I am, I must confess that the Federalists are going too far. What does this convention at Hartford mean but an attempt to dis sever the Union? For all that Edward excuses it on the ground of an effort to thwart an incompetent government, it means nothing more nor less than an ugly word—secession."

"Oh, Aunt Martha, really?"

"That's what it looks like. However, let us hope it will not come about. Here, you may read the letter; there is one enclosed from Rhoda which will give you her news, such as it is."

Lettice read the two letters and returned them without a word; then she went to the window and looked out. "I am very fond of Rhoda," she remarked after a little while. "Her letter did

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not show that she was in very good spirits, Aunt Martha."

"Rhoda is not one to show great enthusiasm," Aunt Martha replied.

"No, I know that; but she does sometimes write more cheerfully. I wonder will she ever marry."

Her aunt made no answer, but instead, arose and observed, "I must get the house well in order for Thomas's home-coming."

"Will they be here in time for the wedding?"

"They will make the effort."

"I believe Patsey would be perfectly willing to wait for the sake of having Uncle Tom here."

"I don't believe in putting off weddings," said Betty, coming in. "It has already been put off once. You must have a new gown for the occasion, Lettice. I have been telling you that for weeks; it isn't like you to be so indifferent to such things."

"There is time enough before New Year's Eve."

"Ye-s, but time flies. Come, go down with me and select it. There will be nothing so good for you as a shopping expedition. I must stop in Lovely Lane to attend to a matter, and then we will give ourselves up to choosing your brides-

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maid gown. Lutie can look after the boy, I suppose."

"Yes, and will be glad to do it. I must look out for a gay calico for Lutie's Christmas."

"You spoil her," remarked Aunt Martha.

"Maybe; but I am so glad to have her with me again."

She came down a little later, cloaked and tip-peted, her curls peeping from under her beaver hat. Betty looked at her mischievously. "You are decked out fairly well, Letty. I'll warrant more than one head will be turned over a shoulder to look after you this morning."

"I care not whether any turn," sighed Lettice.

"Ah-h, that accounts for your pensiveness; your poor little heart has slipped its leash, and you are pining for— Did I hear Aunt Martha say she had a letter from Rhoda? Lettice, you are not mourning for Robert Clinton?"

"How many times must I tell you, no, no, no!" replied Lettice, pettishly. "I don't care a whit for him, as you know well; yet, all this morning's news has brought back the past very vividly, and makes me remember that my home is gone; and my two brothers—one lies on the shores of the great lakes, and one in our own forsaken grave-

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yard. To think that, after all, poor Tom should be denied a resting-place beside his own kith and kin."

"What matters that to him? He has won himself a lasting name for courage and faithfulness, and that is a comfort. Now do put by these sad thoughts and let us talk of the wedding. Oh, by the way, I heard a piece of news; William says Becky Lowe is to marry Stephen Dean. He has won his lady-love after all these years of devotion. There is nothing like perseverance, you see. Poor Birket!"

"Why, poor Birket?"

"Because he didn't persevere; he was too easily set back."

"Now, Betty, I never had a single thought of Birket. He is a nice lad, but too young for my liking."

"I know that, my dear grandmother, and I do not forget that your true love is a sailor lad."

"You mean he was. My dear love will never again be a sailor."

"There are other things he can be. He has been true to his word, has he, Lettice?"

"Of course," she returned proudly. "If he

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made a promise to William, he will keep it to the bitter end."

"Well, it is a great thing to be able to have faith in one's true love. Here we are. Now let us see what we can find to make my little sister outshine the bride." And they were soon absorbed in turning over mulls and muslins, till they settled upon what suited them. Then came a visit to the mantua-maker, and the two returned home in fine spirits.

The days sped by, till the last day of the year brought Patsey's wedding-day. Sylvia's Ramble was opened to receive all the Hopkins tribe, and Aunt Martha, more excited than Lettice had ever seen her, went around with a duster from room to room.

"Do sit down, Aunt Martha," her niece begged. "You will be tired out before night, and these rooms are already as clean as hands can make them."

"My child, I can't sit down. Why, Lettice, I am to see my husband to-day, after all these years." She faltered, and mechanically moved her duster back and forth upon the already polished table, on which, all at once, a tear dropped. "There, I am getting in my dotage," said Aunt Martha, turning

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away, ashamed of this evidence of emotion. "Hark! Lettice, do I hear wheels?"

Lettice ran to the door. "Only Mose from the store, Aunt Martha," she reported. "The boat is not in yet."

But it was not long before there was a shout and a hurrah, a clatter of hoofs and a rumble of wheels, the shrill laughter of little children, as the pickaninnies scampered to open the gates; and in they swept, the long-absent soldiers in the carriage, Joe and William on horseback, Patrick behind them all on a lively mule; then in another moment the master of Sylvia's Ramble was at home again, while Lettice, laughing and crying, was clasping her father's neck and gazing with loving eyes at his tanned, weather-beaten face. "Father, my dear, dear daddy, you are here safe and sound!"

"Here, you people," cried Joe, "I want you to know this is my wedding-day, and I expect all the fuss to be made over me."

"Pshaw!" cried Lettice, gayly. "People can get married any day, but it isn't every day that one has a chance of welcoming back war-stained veterans."

"Can get married any day, eh? Well, I haven't found that I could, or I'd have been a Benedict something over a year."

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"This is better than Dartmoor Prison, isn't it, Joe?" said his uncle.

"Sh! Sh! Let us have no such reminiscences to-day," said Betty. And then they all went into the house to discuss the dinner, over the preparation of which Aunt Martha had spent much anxious thought.

CHAPTER XX.

Her Valentine.

LETTICE was not long in seeking a private talk with her father, there was so much that each wanted to say without the presence of listeners; and when many of the sad things had been talked over, and when the gladness of the present again enfolded them, her father drew the girl close to him.

"And what is this I hear of an impecunious young fellow who has dared to make love to my daughter?" he said.

"He didn't, father, he really didn't; he couldn't help himself, for it was in a moment of great suspense." And she told him the circumstances.

"And you have not given him any reason to hope he may win you?"

"No-o. I don't know. I like him, you know." She twisted a button on her father's coat round and round.

"Ah-h!" he shook his head. "That will not do, my baby. You are too young to judge of what is

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best for you. Give him no more thought. I cannot have my little girl throw herself away upon a poverty-stricken fellow with no means of livelihood and not likely to have any. You are still too young to have this weigh long upon you, my love. Be guided by your daddy, who thinks only of your happiness, and give up this young man, if you love me."

Lettice's lip quivered, but she said bravely: "But suppose I cannot help loving him, father. I would not love you any the less; and it would only mean that I would always be at home with you, if I were faithful to him the rest of my life."

"You have not seen him? He has kept his word to William that he would not try to see you till my return?"

"Yes; but I know he is as true to me as I am to him. If you say so, father, I will not see him again, and I know he would not have me do anything to make you unhappy, but—" She put her head on her father's shoulder to hide her wet eyes.

Mr. Hopkins looked troubled. "Well, my love, well, just let me have time to look further into the matter. I didn't realize that you felt so about it. Don't let your old dad make you unhappy upon this very first day of his home-coming. Cheer up now,

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and let it rest as it is for the present. I promise you to give the subject my best attention."

Lettice put up her mouth for a kiss, feeling a little more comforted. Surely her father loved her too well to let her be miserable all the days of her life. Perhaps, after years and years of waiting, when her lad should have become a rich man through some unexpected means, her father would consent; meantime she would try to be happy, and she could at least think of him, even if she didn't see him.

If there was happiness and peace at Sylvia's Ramble, so there was a great joy in the home of the fair bride. Such a glad ending to a sad year. Her Joe's wife! Faithful, loving Patsey had no other thought; and when, as the day drew to a close, and the guests from far and near came flocking in, each whispered to the other, "Did you ever see such a radiant face as the bride's?"

"And when is your wedding to be, Lettice?" asked Becky Lowe, important in her own prospective marriage.

"Law, child, don't ask me?" replied Lettice, lightly. "But pray don't insist that I shall be your bridesmaid, Becky, if you would have me married, for this is my second service in that capacity; the first was at Brother William's wedding, and you

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know the old saying, 'three times a bridesmaid, never a bride.' "

"Who told you I was to be married?" simpered Becky.

"I didn't have to be told," Lettice replied teasingly; "it is a self-evident fact. Are we to have a dance? So we are. With pleasure, Tyler." And leaving Becky, Lettice was led out upon the floor. She longed, yet hesitated, to ask her partner when he had heard from his cousin, and where was he? But all of a sudden her heart stood still, for there in close converse with her father stood her comrade in many a perilous hour. He looked grave and was talking earnestly. Lettice, so confused that she forgot her steps, turned the wrong person, to the amusement of her friends. "Who could ever suppose that Lettice Hopkins would forget a dance?" cried one. So she recovered herself and took better heed to the figures of the Cauliflower, and at the end of the dance was led back to her seat, her eager little heart beating fast. Why did he not come and speak to her? And O dear, why should her father detain him? Did he mean that when he was separated from her but by the distance of a few feet, he was still to keep his promise to avoid her? Common politeness would forbid that. Surely they were

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talking longer than was necessary, and accounts of battles and such things would keep till another time. Yet, perhaps it was she of whom they were talking, and the thought made her heart beat even faster.

Presently her father looked over to where she sat and smiled at her ; then he spoke a few words to his companion and both came toward her.

“I have been thanking this young gentleman for his several services done my daughter,” said Mr. Hopkins. “I was fortunate in having the opportunity.” Lettice looked up with a lovely smile and murmured a few conventional words of greeting.

“Lettice, my love,” said her father, gravely, “do you know that Mr. Baldwin is the same who helped our poor Tom to escape from the British ship? Mr. Baldwin did not know him as the same, under his assumed name, and, strange as it may seem, I never connected Mr. Ellicott Baldwin with the young lieutenant who came so nobly to Tom’s defence, and I promised Tom that if ever I had the chance I would try to pay his debt of gratitude ; so, Mr. Baldwin, will you give my daughter your hand — for this dance?” The start and blush which followed these words caused Mr. Hopkins to smile.

“Would it tax your generosity beyond its limit to ask you to grant my request for a dance, Miss Let-

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tice?" said Mr. Baldwin, looking at her with all his soul in his eyes.

She arose immediately, and for the rest of the evening she was enveloped in an atmosphere of joy. She forgot that she had not seen her lover, nor heard from him, in all these months. She was aware only of a new gladness, of how delightful it was to have him near her. She did not know she could be so glad. Once Betty whispered as she passed them, "You look as happy as the bride herself, Letty."

Lettice for answer made a little mouth at her. She felt all her youth and buoyancy returning to her, as she found herself once more in the company of this beloved one and surrounded by the merry friends of her childhood. To all who knew her she was the old Lettice of the days before the war, and her pretty, innocent coquetries but added to her charm.

"Shall you remain long in the neighborhood?" Mr. Baldwin asked.

"No, we only came down for the wedding. I do not know what Brother William and Betty will do; Uncle Tom wants them to stay at Sylvia's Ramble till their new home is built, but I shall probably go back to town with my father. I have

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not heard his plans; we have been so busy with the wedding. Is not Patsey a sweet bride, and does not Cousin Joe look as if he were in the seventh heaven? They have been such a devoted pair of lovers that every one is the more interested in them, especially as we came so near to losing Cousin Joe."

"And you are happy, I hope, Miss Lettice? It must be a great pleasure for you to see your father again. You did not expect I would be here to-night, did you?" he asked abruptly.

"No, I did not."

"My cousins would have it that I must come down to spend Christmas, and then nothing would do but I must stay for this affair. I had to refuse at first, but Tyler insisted, and when I knew your father would be here, I consented." The two looked at each other, and there was a complete understanding of the state of affairs without further explanation.

"Have you been in Washington all this while?" Lettice asked.

"No, I returned to Boston for a short time. I made a visit to my sister; she is my only near relative, you know; and then, as I was not in sympathy with the Federalist movement, in which

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so many of my friends up there believed, I thought I would return to Baltimore and see what I could do as a landsman. I have been rather hopeless about my future till now."

"And now?" The look of interest and loving sympathy in Lettice's eyes was almost too much for the young man's self-control.

"I am more encouraged," he told her after a moment's pause, in which it seemed to him that she must hear the wild beating of his heart. "I shall remain in Baltimore, and may I hope to see you there? You will be at your uncle's for the present?"

"I think so, and — yes, I will be glad to see you there." She wondered if he had the faintest idea of how glad. "Hark, there is twelve o'clock striking," she exclaimed; "it is the New Year. I can be the first to offer you my good wishes. May it be a happy year to you!"

"May it bring you much joy!" he returned, bending over and kissing her hand; surely that little offering of homage might be allowed him on the occasion of the dawn of a new year.

"Happy New Year!" called one to another. "Happy New Year!"

"It is a happy New Year to us, Patsey," said

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Joe, as the last guests departed, and the last lantern twinkled down the road.

"It is the happiest New Year of my life, Joe," said Patsey, lifting her face to his. "My dear, my dear, suppose you were still languishing in that terrible prison!" She shuddered and hid her face on his shoulder.

"It is you who wear the fetters now," said Joe, playfully, to turn her thoughts from the subject.

"Yes; but I rejoice in my bondage," said Patsey, kissing her shining wedding ring. "I glory in being a slave. I am your willing prisoner."

"Not my prisoner, but my queen, my wife," he answered.

"It is a happy New Year for me," said Lettice, cuddling close to her father's side, as they drove home together. "What were you and Mr. Baldwin talking about so long?"

He drew her closer to him under the warm bearskin robes. "About several things. Is my little girl so very fond of that young man? And would it make her very unhappy to give him up?"

"Oh, daddy, dear, you mustn't ask such personal questions."

"But I want to know."

"Why?"

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"Because if he is everything to you, I shall put into execution a plan I have; otherwise, I might do something else. You see, he has no future, my child, unless some one uses influence to give him a start. I would rather he were a Marylander, but he cannot help it that he had the misfortune to be born elsewhere," he added, laughing. "Now, the question is: How far shall I use that influence?"

Lettice's answer came in muffled tones from under the robes, "Use every particle you possess."

And her father, with a laugh that turned into a sigh, returned: "So let it be, my love. Now don't ask me any more questions, but let time decide how it will turn out." And Lettice was quite content at this.

The next thing they were all settled down in Baltimore, and Mr. Baldwin was filling the place Lettice's father had always intended for Jamie, while Lettice realized that this new confidential clerk was obliged to stop at the house very frequently upon one pretext or another. So the winter promised to be a very pleasant one.

The report of the great battle of New Orleans, with the news of peace, came to end all controversies over the war, and the young people of Let-

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tice's acquaintance organized a grand sleighing party in honor of the good news.

Did she ever forget that night? Under the gleaming stars, well muffled up from the winter's cold, she did not feel the sharp, frosty air. From her quilted hood of silk bordered with swansdown, her fair little face peeped like a rosebud from a snowdrift. She snuggled down warmly by the side of Ellicott Baldwin, who had grown so deft with the use of his one hand that to drive was no great task. Over the snow they sped, bells jingling ahead of and behind them. They talked of many things. It was not often that they were alone in each other's company, and at last the conversation took a new turn.

"Do you know what I said to your father that last night of the old year? Are you cold, darling? You shivered then."

"Did I shiver? No, I am not cold." She was trembling at his words. "What did you say?" she asked, almost in a whisper.

"I told him how much I loved his daughter, and he said that I must not tell you then, but that if I could make myself a place in business, as I hoped to do, that he would then be better able to say whether I might speak to you or not. And then—how good he is!—he gave me the

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chance to show what I could do. Lettice, am I presumptuous? Could you? Do you?"

"Oh, here is the bridge! We shall have to stop and pay toll." But before the bridge was crossed, more than one toll was paid.

"I don't care if he has but one hand," pouted Lettice to Betty's teasing remarks, when the latter came up for the grand illumination.

"And he is a Yankee."

"Well, suppose he is?"

"And he'll take you away from your father, whom you have sworn never to leave."

"Indeed, then, he will not; for we are all to live together, and so much the better for my dear dad. Aha! a valentine! See, Betty! It has come by a special messenger. Danny found it under the door. Isn't it a beauty, with that pretty filigree paper, and those roses? And what lovely verses! They are original, I know, for perhaps you are not aware that my sweetheart has a gift for making rhymes. Listen:—

"“LINES TO THE LADY OF MY LOVE.

“God bless thee, dearest, for thy love,
Whose pure and holy light,
Upon my pathway here below
Hath shed its radiance bright.

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God bless thee for the tenderness
Thy spirit aye hath shown
Midst all the darkness, doubt, and gloom
Thy fond, true heart hath known.
My dearest, I think but of thee
In evening's silent hour.
And when fond mem'ry bears me back
I gladly own thy power.
Where'er I go, whate'er betide,
One only love is mine.
Thro' sunshine and thro' storm my heart
Is wholly, truly thine.'

"Isn't that lovely, Betty? My Valentine, you truly are." And she kissed the verses so rapturously that Betty laughed merrily.

"It does me good to see you really in love at last, Lettice. I used to think you 'quite gone' when Robert Clinton was with us."

"Do not speak of that; yet, by the way, what do you think? Ellicott saw him in Philadelphia last week, and instead of fighting a duel, as they had both vowed to when they should next meet, they actually shook hands over the good news of peace at last. And Ellicott told him of me, and, so he says, Mr. Clinton looked quite pale at what he told him of our engagement, but wished him joy and congratulated him as bravely as his best friend would do. He sent me his best wishes, too, and

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so I may consider that he has forgiven me. On top of all this, to-day comes a letter from Rhoda to Aunt Martha, a dutiful letter, as Rhoda's always are. Here it is; I will read you what she says: 'My father has long been anxious to make a match between myself and Robert Clinton, and so I have consented. Robert and I have a warm affection for each other and have known each other from childhood. I think I know all of his faults as well as his virtues. Each of us has a past to confess, as you well know, my dear aunt, but it is a past that can never be recalled, and I shall not be a less dutiful daughter and wife because of mine.' "

"Poor Jamie!" sighed Betty.

"Yes, but I am glad of this piece of news. I shall not care to meet Mr. Robert Clinton again, but Rhoda I shall always love, and I believe she loves me."

And indeed, Rhoda came all the way from Boston to be Lettice's bridesmaid, for the wedding took place in the spring. Lettice declared that she would never leave her father, and since Joe and Patsey had come to Baltimore to live, it was high time that they were leaving her uncle's.

"Bless me!" said Betty, "we shall be ruined in

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preparing for so many weddings; Patsey's first, and then yours, before we have taken breath. Will you come down and be married from our new house, Lettice? It isn't as big as the old home, but it will hold a warm welcome for our friends. To be sure, we can kill no fatted calf, for all the British left us is one old ewe, and William and I are counting upon starting life over again, depending upon her as our sole prospect of future wealth."

Lettice laughed. "Patsey might spare you a goose; she tells me she has already a brood of young goslings."

"I don't have to go to Patsey to find a goose," replied Betty, saucily; "you haven't taken your eyes from that note you just received. I suppose it is from that precious Yankee of yours. Is it a receipt for brown bread? Mother promised me a hen; she actually has two whole ones left, and if I can get eggs I'll have some chicks before long. And father has a heifer which he traded for, with some old Tory or other, and which he has promised me. But I can't promise you any great fixings, Lettice, dearly as I want to have you married from our house. Will you come?"

Lettice shook her head. "No, we shall be married at St. Paul's. I think I would rather not

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go down again just now, Betty." And Betty understood. "There should be no sad memories to mar the girl's wedding," she reflected.

Yet Lettice did go down once more to her old home, and she stood with her lover in the old graveyard which had been the scene of so many experiences.

"Do you remember the night we first came here together?" Ellicott asked. "I loved you then and was desperately jealous of Robert Clinton."

"Were you really?" said Lettice. She stood thinking it all over. "You had some reason to be, sir," she acknowledged. Then she drew closer to him. "But there can never be a cause for that again. No one can ever come between us now, my beloved." And what answer he made, only the mating birds in the trees above them heard.

A pretty wedding it was, with a goodly array of uniforms to offset the bright gowns. The church was crowded, many bronzed faces were to be seen, and more than one empty sleeve. Lutie, carried away by the occasion, bore her mistress's train half-way up the aisle, and when she discovered what she had done, she retreated, overcome by confusion, to be scolded by Aunt Hagar, who made her

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first journey to Baltimore to see "Mars Jeems's Miss Letty git ma'ied."

"I prosefy dat match long whiles ergo," she said to Mammy who, in all her glory, was in charge of Betty's baby, and waiting to ride to church "lak white folkses."

"Yass, ma'am, I prosefy dat," Aunt Hagar reiterated.

"Go 'long," said Mammy. "Ennybody prosefy dat. Hit don' tek no preacher ner no luck-ball ter jint dem two f'om de fust. I see dat whilst I nussin' him dat time."

"Humph!" Aunt Hagar gave a mighty grunt. "Ef I ain' hed de prosefyin' an' de 'intment, an' de cunjurin' o' dey inimies, whar yuh reckon dem young folkses be now?"

But Mammy had no answer to make, for the carriage was ready, and it was too important an occasion to spend time in "argyfyin'."

"Lettice certainly has a lot of friends," said Betty, as the carriage bearing the newly wedded pair drove off. "I believe the entire American army must have reserved their discarded footwear to throw after that couple. Did you ever see such a pile of old shoes?"

A week later Rhoda returned to her home to

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make ready for her own wedding. Lettice kissed her good-by with more emotion than she believed possible. Would they ever meet again? Rhoda herself, looking back through a mist of tears, saw the picture which ever after remained with her: a fair young wife in her new home, standing between husband and father, loyal to both, as she had always been to the cause for which they had suffered.

